Bridging Program

for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

CALGARY MODEL

JANUARY 2012

Government of Alberta

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Executive Summary

In order to provide proactive solutions to emerging demands in the education sector workforce, a six-month bridging-to-employment program for foreign-prepared teachers was piloted in Calgary, Alberta in September 2010 through a partnership between the Calgary Board of Education, the Calgary Separate School District and the University of Calgary. The program was based on an existing course for foreign-prepared teachers offered in Calgary since February 2008 entitled Transitions to Alberta Classrooms program (TAC). The pilot course was supported by a grant from Alberta Education and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). This bridging program aimed to assist foreign-prepared teachers, living in Alberta, in achieving two goals: teacher certification and employment.

Included in this report is a review of current literature in the field of internationally educated teachers in Canada, a description of the program and its curriculum, and a summary of the outcomes and impacts of the program on certification and employment for participating teachers. A model for similar bridging programs for foreign-prepared teachers is included along with suggestions for additional resources, policies and practices that can support the employment and integration of foreign-prepared teachers in Alberta.

The purpose of this report is to identify the specific professional needs of foreign-prepared teachers in Alberta, to describe the essential elements of a pilot program created to address those needs, and to offer solutions for comprehensive support for foreign-prepared teachers as they seek to bridge the gap between their previous teaching experiences and those expected in the Canadian context. This report can serve as a resource for teacher preparation institutions and school boards throughout Alberta as they seek to create provisions in their jurisdictions for the certification and employment of foreign-prepared teachers.

Program Logic Models:

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers (BPFPT)

Program Plan				Outcome Plan
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Target Group	Outcome Statements
Resources, Budget Lines	Activities, Tasks and Strategies	Deliverables	Client Group, Sample	Short-Term
Staffing: An instructor and field advisor 1.0 full time position. An Associate to manage and organize administrative tasks .25 full time position. **Classroom:** Able to hold up to 20 students, with technology available for use during instruction. **Equipment:** laptops with an internet connection; SMART Board A Blackboard shell. **Materials:** Class texts; Photocopying other reading material. **Travel:** Mileage for observations of schools and practicum placements.	24 week fulltime program for foreign-prepared teachers – 360 hours classroom instruction and 360 hours practicum teaching placements. Classroom assignments include reading, writing and presentations on pedagogical topics. Guest speakers from local school boards will also be included. Language training embedded in professional situations and scenarios commonly encountered by Canadian teachers (i.e. educational content as the carrier of language). A combination of a classroom-based component that provides both theory and opportunities for practice teaching in a safe and controlled environment with a strong practicum component where participants can build on their skills and benefit from formative feedback. **Content themes:** • The structure of the educational system in Alberta. • The Provincial Programs of Studies. • The core values and mandates of the local school boards. • Curriculum design and unit/lesson planning. • Classroom and school operations. • Assessment and Evaluation techniques and strategies. • Methodology and learner-centered instructional strategies. • Classroom management. • Differentiation and support for diverse learners within the classroom. • Inclusive classroom environments (Special Needs, Gifted, ESL). • Clear communication with colleagues, parents and the school community. • Technology in education and the direction of 21st century learning. • The roles and responsibilities of teachers in Alberta schools.	Upon successful completion of the program/participants will have: • University credits to obtain certification in Alberta. The course may completely fulfill their requirements for certification, or have put them much closer to their target than individual courses would have. • A professional portfolio containing letters from partner teachers and the instructor of the course, as well as other artefacts which speak to their local teaching experiences. This portfolio will put the teachers in a strong position to show school boards that they have demonstrated their ability to teach in a Canadian context. • Practiced interviewing which will allow them to be more fully prepared to successfully obtain employment as teachers in Alberta. • Important networking within local school boards in Calgary and surrounding area. • A clearer understanding of the culture of Canadian schools, the roles and responsibilities of teachers in Alberta, and the Alberta Program of Studies. • Obtained the professional language skills necessary to communicate effectively both orally and in writing about educational topics to a variety of stakeholders including, colleagues, administrators, parents and students.	Immigrant teachers who meet the all of the criteria for teacher certification in Alberta but still have a gap between either their previous teaching experiences or those expected in the Canadian context, or between their general language proficiency and the expectations of professional communication of the profession in Canada. Foreign-prepared teachers who are deemed to require advanced coursework in Education to obtain teacher certification in Alberta. Foreign-prepared teachers (TOEFL 90+; CLB 7+) who have not quite reached the English language criteria required for Certification (TOEFL 98; CLB 8+). (Up to 20 teachers in the program per yearly intake).	Teachers will reflect upon their past teaching practices and those skills required to teach effectively in Canada. Teachers will observe and reflect upon teaching practices in Canada through classroom observations. Teachers will begin to use theoretical knowledge of current Canadian pedagogy from class topics and apply these to their lesson planning, and teaching practices in their practicums. Teachers will self-evaluate their English language skills through audio and visual tapes, as well as peer feedback and formal assessments and identify and set language learning goals.

Outcome Plan		Measurement Plan			
Outcome Statements		Indicator	Outcome Measurement		Design
Intermediate Mid-Term	Long-Term (Impact)	Evidence of Success	Tests	Other Measures	Data Measurements
Teachers will be able to describe the differences in their previous teaching experiences and discuss the elements of effective teaching in Canada. Teachers will demonstrate the ability to use the Alberta Program of Studies to plan, teach and assess a unit of study in a local school. Teachers will effectively communicate with their partner teachers about their teaching practice, specific local teaching context and student needs and justify pedagogical choices made during their teaching. Teachers will evaluate changes made to their English language proficiency through self-identified and formal evidence of their language growth and development.	Teachers will have a thorough understanding of the Teacher Quality Standard applicable to all certified teachers in Alberta. They will be able to demonstrate this through their practicum teaching experiences. Teachers will understand the roles and responsibilities of teachers, parents, administrators and other support staff in Alberta schools. Teachers will have in-depth knowledge of current pedagogical practices in Alberta schools and demonstrate the application of these practices in their teaching. Teachers will have obtained English language proficiency in all areas of language production and will be able to demonstrate this through their oral and written communication with colleagues, students, parents, administrators. Teachers will have developed lasting professional relationships and networking in Calgary.	75% of the teachers who finish the program will successfully pass the screening interview with a school board they apply to in Alberta. 80% of the teacher cohort for each intake will complete the program. 75% of the program completers will achieve an overall language proficiency of CLB 8 at the end of the course. This level of language proficiency is the minimum threshold for teacher certification in Alberta. 75% of the completing teacher cohort will demonstrate understanding through providing evidence of the TQS indicators in the Teacher Quality Standard Table in both of their practicum teaching placements.	The CLBPT Assessment of English language proficiency offered by ILVARC. This will be used at the beginning of the course to establish baseline language proficiency and at the end of the course to establish growth of language proficiency during the course.	Teaching Quality Standard Table – created for use by partnering teachers, participating teachers and the instructor. Self-evaluations of teaching and language use by the teachers – created by the course instructor. Peer feedback rubrics created by the course instructor for oral presentations to the class. Formal evaluations from instructor of practicum teaching (2 per semester). Narrative evaluations by partner teachers of practicum teaching (1 per semester) and on-going feedback from partner teachers both in written and oral form. Self-directed language learning journal completed by the teachers of the development of their language proficiency and communication skills by the teachers.	Data collected from the teachers who have completed the course will be used to alter the curriculum, making it more effective and suited to their needs for future intakes. Human Resource Departments from local school boards will be interviewed to determine the relevance of the curriculum and activities to help foreign-prepared teachers to enter the local teaching force. At the end of each semester of the course, participants will be asked to evaluate the program and suggest activities for areas they feel need to be improved. The instructor will attend and present findings on the program at professional teacher development conferences. Excellence in preparation of foreign-prepared teachers will continue to be researched at these gatherings.

The purpose of this report is to identify the specific professional needs of foreign-prepared teachers in Alberta, to describe the essential elements of a pilot program created to address those needs, and to offer solutions for comprehensive support for foreign-prepared teachers as they seek to bridge the gap between their previous teaching experiences and those expected in the Canadian context.

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CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the Resource

The face of Alberta has changed dramatically over the past ten years. In 2006, the foreign-born population of Alberta exceeded the half-million mark. Alberta's strong growth is reflected in student and teacher projections, which are becoming increasingly diverse. In response to changing workforce demands in education in Alberta, the *Education Sector Workforce Planning Framework for Action* was developed in 2008. This framework outlines a five-year strategic plan designed to provide proactive solutions to emerging demands in the education sector workforce. Strategic Action Three of this framework aims to create a bridging-to-employment program for foreign-prepared teachers. This bridging program would assist foreign-prepared teachers in achieving two goals – teacher certification and employment.

In the fall of 2010, a pilot program for foreign-prepared teachers was designed and delivered through a unique partnership between Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Catholic School District and the University of Calgary. This pilot program was based on the model of an existing bridging program for immigrant teachers already established in Calgary entitled, the Transitions to Alberta Classrooms program (TAC). The pilot was supported financially through funding from a special grant from the province of Alberta and additional funding was secured through the Government of Canada. This full-time, six-month, fifteen credit, post-baccalaureate program served twenty immigrant teachers and ran from September 2010 to March 2011. All of the participants of the program were qualified teachers in their country of origin, had immigrated to Alberta, and had applied to become certificated to teach in Alberta. This resource can be used by other teacher preparation institutions and school boards as a model to implement a foreign-prepared teacher bridging program.

The following chapter outlines some of the specific issues and challenges faced by foreign-prepared teachers in obtaining certification and employment identified by current research in Canada. It introduces some of the benefits that a multicultural, multilingual teaching force can offer Alberta schools, the specific ways that foreign-prepared teachers can address labour force needs and positively impact the diverse communities found in Alberta schools. It also introduces the Transitions to Alberta Classrooms Program, which provided the model for the pilot program.

Chapter 3 describes in detail the design, curriculum, and resources used in the pilot bridging program. It describes the roles and responsibilities of the partnerships between school boards, the teacher preparation institution and other stakeholders, strategies for developing English language proficiency, participant demographics, and discusses the outcomes of the pilot related to teacher certification and integration into local school boards.

Chapter 4 offers a model of a bridging to certification program for foreign-prepared teachers based on the pilot program. This chapter offers suggested timelines for delivery, purposes, course design, accreditation and selection criteria for participants.

The final chapter of this report suggests future directions, activities and policies that can further support the professional needs of immigrant teachers in Alberta. Some of these suggested activities are the development of information guides, the creation of outreach and educational DVDs on foreign-prepared teachers, and a mentorship program to support foreign-prepared teachers after employment. These recommendations focus on a holistic, multidimensional approach to facilitating certification, employment and retention of foreign-prepared teachers in Alberta.

This resource can serve as the starting point for the creation of new bridging programs for foreign-prepared teachers by other teacher preparation institutions and school boards that are adapted to suit their diverse educational contexts. It draws upon the outcomes of the pilot program to offer a range of ideas for extending and expanding support for foreign-prepared teachers in Alberta. As the number of Alberta students is expected to grow over the next ten years, an increased need for teachers is likely. This report can assist in addressing Alberta's vision of having the right people with the right skills in the right places at the right times to meet the needs of Alberta's learners.

CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 2

Background

Immigration and Teaching in Canada

Immigration has steadily increased in Canada over the past twenty years. Between 1991 and 2000 the greatest number of immigrants in one hundred years arrived in Canada – approximately 2.2 million (Statistics Canada, 2003 in Shervey & O'Byrne, 2006). With an aging population and low birth rate, about two-thirds of Canada's population growth comes from international immigration. Current statistics from the 2006 Canadian census report that after Australia, Canada is the second highest immigrant receiving Western country (Statistics Canada, 2007a). It is estimated in 2030, immigration may be the only source of population growth in Canada (Walsh & Brigham, 2007).

Canada's immigration policies have increasingly focused on attracting highly skilled and well-educated immigrants. Immigrants in the family class and independent (economic) categories possess levels of education above the average of Canadian born men and women (Walsh & Brigham, 2007). Unfortunately despite high levels of education, 46% of immigrants report that finding adequate employment is the greatest difficulty they encounter after immigrating (Statistics Canada, 2007a). They also report that the major factors contributing to the challenge of finding employment are a lack of Canadian job experience, foreign credentials and experience that are often not accepted in Canada, difficulties with the specific English language requirements for employment, and a prevailing lack of opportunities that suit their educational backgrounds, training and skills.

In Alberta, immigration trends are similar. Over the next decade, immigration will be the main source of population growth in Alberta. Recent figures indicate that immigration has more than doubled from an average of 9,500 between the 1970's and 1990's, to an average of 22,000 since 2000. Much of this increase has occurred after 2005. 32,640 immigrants landed in Alberta in 2010, an increase of approximately 58% from 2006 when Alberta received 20,716 immigrants (Alberta Immigration Progress

Report, 2011). More than 60% of immigrants to Alberta are economic immigrants (i.e. skilled workers). Calgary and Edmonton have attracted over 80% of these immigrants with Calgary receiving approximately half (48%). In fact, recent immigration has designated Calgary as one of the fastest growing foreign-born populations in Canada. In 2006, the foreign-born population in Calgary grew at a rate three times faster than its Canadian-born population (Statistics Canada, 2007b).

While the number of immigrants and visible minorities is steadily rising in Alberta, the workforce is aging. The effects on the educational field are compounded by the relatively mature age of teachers (due to the educational demands for qualifying to be a teacher), and the fact that teachers generally tend to retire at a younger age than other professions. Statistics Canada reported in 2003 virtually half of the Canadian educational workforce was on the verge of retirement (in Shervey & O'Byrne, 2006).

In the educational field in Alberta, a large number of the teaching population is preparing to retire and a growing number of immigrant teachers are applying for and successfully receiving certification to teach in Alberta. However at this time, there are no statistics that can tell us whether immigrant teachers are being hired to teach in Alberta schools, if they are successful in maintaining employment as teachers when they are hired, and to what extent they feel accepted as legitimate teaching professionals in their schools when they are employed. Newly arrived immigrants working as teachers in Alberta's K-12 schools is a relatively new phenomenon, one that may require expanded paradigms and greater understanding by all stakeholders in the educational community – teachers, students, parents, administrators, and teacher educators.

> *When I think back to when I was teaching before I thought that I knew how to manage different things, but in Canada here I found there was so much more to learn in terms of teaching and learning, and there's something hidden I never imagined that I would know how to do.*

In 2006 in a report to Human Resources and Development Canada (HRDC), the Canadian Teachers Federation identified underrepresentation of visible minorities and Aboriginal people in the education sector as a growing concern and threat to the Canada's Employment Equity Act (p.3). A recent review of the demographics of the teaching population in Canada also confirmed that the proportion of teachers of colour in elementary and secondary schools is much lower than that of the general population, and most definitely lower than student populations (Ryan, Pollack & Antonelli, 2009). "A profound mismatch exists between the profile of the teaching profession and the diversity of students taught" (Amin, 2001 in Schmidt, Young & Mandzuk, 2010, p. 449).

Canada has a school-age population of approximately five million students and a teaching workforce of approximately 300,000. As the largest professional group in the labour force in Canada, the teaching profession is a strong example of systemic gaps in the professional integration of new Canadians.

The Benefits of Hiring Ethnically and Culturally Diverse Teachers

The profile of 'typical' Canadian classrooms has altered in recent years to include a tapestry of students possessing varying cultural, ethnic, developmental, physical and linguistic backgrounds. The literature describing the benefits to schools of a diverse teaching force emphasizes primarily the important role minority teachers have in reflecting the diversity of today's classrooms. It is recognized in the literature that in such diverse contexts, teachers can serve as key components in the fostering of multicultural values. Bascia (1996) reports that immigrant teachers often take on advocacy roles for their students through their ability to empathize and understand their students' lives and emotions. Unique teacher knowledge is created through a common immigrant or minority experience and as a result immigrant teachers can often take on roles of mentors and cultural mediators for their ethnic minority students. It is also noted that immigrant teachers can have an important role in preparing mainstream students to deal with the rapidly changing demographics of Canadian society (Kailasanathan, 2006; Bascia, 1996, Walsh & Brigham, 2007). "A more diverse teaching population has the potential to provide different perspectives and role models as well as educational possibilities for all students, staff and community members in terms of anti-racist and multicultural education" (Walsh & Brigham, 2007, p. 12).

Another noted benefit of immigrant teachers is the diversity of knowledge about pedagogy they bring from their home countries to new classrooms (Seah & Bishop, 2002; Kailasanathan, 2006). Stewart (2010) defines the professional knowledge base that immigrant teachers hold as professional capital, or "all that gives them competence as a professional teacher. It encompasses their cultural capital but also their beliefs and assumptions about good teaching and how students learn best – it is essentially, what makes each teacher tick" (p. 48). Kailasanathan (2006) also emphasizes the benefits of the diverse pedagogical knowledge that immigrant teachers can bring to schools, "They possess the expertise to combine effective learning practices from their home countries with effective teaching practices in Canada to enrich Canadian schools with a diverse pedagogy" (p. 5). In addition, Su (1996) asserts that culturally diverse teachers are more likely to engage in culturally relevant pedagogy than teachers of the dominant cultural or ethnic group.

Research supports the concept of a richly diverse teaching population as part of the equity and fairness agenda in Canada (Schmidt et al, 2010). In 2006, the Canadian Federation of Teachers identified diversifying the teaching force as a priority, especially in terms of increasing the numbers of women and visible minorities in administrative positions. Despite this increasing focus on the need to diversify the teaching force, studies have identified a number of obstacles immigrant teachers face in qualifying as teachers and obtaining employment in Canadian schools.

Transitions to Alberta Classrooms Program (TAC)

A needs assessment and program model for a professional bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers was funded by Alberta Immigration and Employment in 2006 through a grant given to the Calgary Board of Education Chinook Learning Services. This report provided background on immigration trends in Alberta, an overview of similar national and international teacher bridging programs, and recommendations for the design of a full-time, six-month course for foreign-prepared teachers. The Program was entitled the Transitions to Alberta Classrooms program (TAC).

The review of the research on bridging programs for foreign-prepared teachers indicated that a practicum or practice teaching experience would be critical to the successful preparation of teachers with international qualifications. This component was embedded in the TAC program and required the participants to be in schools for approximately half of the allocated course hours. The educational content components consistently suggested by other programs of professional bridging programs for teachers included the philosophy of the system of education in the local context, curriculum design and unit/lesson planning, classroom and school operations, methodology and learner-centered instructional strategies, classroom management and assessment strategies. The professional language components would include the development of professional language ability and clear communication taught, practiced and applied through an integrated model of English language instruction for specific purposes (ESP).

In the beginning, there was so much thrill and excitement to start this new journey and learn about teaching in Alberta; at the same time, there was some nervousness as well. My previous knowledge and teaching experience gave me some satisfaction that I already know a lot, so this would not be that hard for me. After a few weeks of studying about different learning theories and teaching strategies, I started thinking that my previous knowledge and experience was not enough to support me in this journey of teaching. I needed to work hard to build up my knowledge and understanding in regards to teaching in the school system over here in Canada.

Calgary Board of Education and the University of Calgary collaborated on the development and delivery of the first cohort of the Transitions to Alberta Classrooms Program in 2008.

The University of Calgary sought accreditation for the TAC course for fifteen credit hours (five half-courses) from the Department of Graduate Studies. The university agreed to support the program through registering the teachers as off-campus, Open Studies students through the Office of Undergraduate Programs, collaborating on course contact and assisting in making practicum placements for the students. By mutual agreement from both partners, an Instructor and Field Advisor for the TAC program was hired. Alberta Education was consulted on the course content of the program to ensure it would meet teacher certification requirements.

The TAC course offered 360 hours of classroom instruction and 360 hours of practicum teaching, for a total of 720 hours over a six-month period. Teachers were recruited for the first intake of the program in November 2007, and the first cohort of eight TAC teachers began on February 8, 2008. September, 2008 to March, 2009 had 10 participants and September, 2009 to March 2009 had 14 participants.

The program design of the pilot of the Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers (BPFPT) found in this report was based on the TAC program with changes made based on feedback from students, the instructor and practicum partner teachers from the three cohorts of the TAC program. The pilot program also brought in the Calgary Catholic School District as a partner for the pilot course.

The majority of the participants that completed the TAC program (approximately 75%) from the first three cohorts went on to successful certification and/or teaching positions in Alberta.

CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 3

A Pilot Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers in Alberta 2010-2011

Philosophy and Goals

In response to the growing number for foreign-prepared teachers seeking certification in Alberta, a professional bridging program was piloted in Calgary in the fall of 2010 based upon the model of the Transitions to Alberta Classrooms program (TAC). The aim of this six-month, fulltime course was to assist teachers prepared outside of Canada and the United States in meeting coursework requirements for certification set out by Alberta Education, while also enhancing their pedagogical knowledge and communication skills for teaching. For foreign-prepared teachers who had already received Alberta teaching certification but had yet been unable to secure work as a teacher, this program would also serve as a mentorship and employability initiative to upgrade their professional knowledge, give them valuable teaching experience in Alberta schools, improve their communication skills for teaching and increase their understanding of Canadian teaching contexts.

In order to maximize their professional transition and integration, the pilot Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers (BPFPT) was designed to offer experiences for foreign-prepared teachers in both the theory and practice of local Canadian educational contexts. It was determined that the delivery of the classroom-based component of the program should itself model and integrate effective teaching practices in its design and delivery: for example, using student-centered instructional approaches, integrating formative assessment and self-evaluation, effectively integrating technology, and incorporating active learning and inquiry. Another important consideration was the inclusion of expert guest speakers and experts on various educational and curricular topics to provide the teachers with a comprehensive view of current pedagogy and practice, while also assisting them in establishing a local professional network and access to community resources.

Field-oriented experiences would provide a context for greater understanding of teaching found in real educational situations. The embedded practicum component of the course would provide the participants an opportunity to become familiar with the rhythm of Canadian school and classroom life throughout the course of the school year, offer extended time for practice teaching and professional language development for instruction, provide opportunities for developing relationships with students and mentor teachers, allow the teachers to observe and teach in real school environments and have greater access to communication activities specific to the Canadian teaching profession.

> “*The most important thing that I learned that I have to, not I have to, but I have to be prepared to teach more than what I was trained to. So with a more flexile system you have to be a more flexile person in teaching.*”

Modeled on other professional immigrant bridging programs in Alberta such as those designed for engineers and doctors, a logical progression from classroom instruction to direct involvement in authentic language encounters in schools was integral in the approach to language development in the bridging program. An employability module including the development of professional portfolios and interviewing skills was added to the course content to assist the teachers in being fully prepared for the entry into educational workplaces upon completion of the program.

The aim of the integrated learning experiences designed in the pilot program was to provide opportunities for the foreign-prepared teachers to achieve:

- Understanding of their responsibilities to students, parents, colleagues, the profession, and the wider community as a teaching professional;
- Understanding of the diverse ways in which people learn;
- Understanding of the legislated, moral and ethical frameworks within which Alberta teachers work;
- The ability to deal with complex and sometimes conflicting demands posed by children and their diverse learning needs, evolving curriculum standards and knowledge, and needs of particular contexts of teaching and learning;

- The ability to translate the Alberta curriculum content and objectives into meaningful learning activities;
- The ability to apply a variety of teaching and learning approaches;
- The ability to plan and deliver a range of teaching and learning activities;
- The ability to create and maintain environments that are conducive to student learning;
- The ability to apply a variety of technologies to meet student learning needs;
- The ability to gather and use information about students' learning needs and progress; and
- The ability to communicate effectively and clearly with the diverse partners involved in education.

Design

The foreign-prepared teacher pilot program consisted of two essential and integrated components – professional seminars and practicum placements. Like the TAC program, it was designed as a fulltime, six-month program beginning in September and finishing in March. The course was divided into two distinct semesters (Semester 1: September to December and Semester 2: January to March). In the first semester, the teachers attended class on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays (9:00–3:30) and their practicum days were Wednesdays & Thursdays. In the second semester, the teachers attended class on Mondays and Fridays and were placed in their practicums on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. At the end of each practicum, a three-week immersion period in the schools was scheduled.

Instruction in the pilot program was designed to include face-to-face classroom activities, workshops with guest speakers, case scenarios, student-led seminars, role-play, and student-led presentations. The language of teaching was addressed and evaluated across all components of the program as teachers had opportunities to demonstrate appropriate oral and written professional language specific to educational contexts. The specific language domain of teaching includes oral communication with students, parents, colleagues and administrators, as well as the language of instruction and the language of presentation. This domain also includes written communication related to professional educator tasks such as writing report cards and lesson plans, Individual Program Plans (IPPs), and email communication with parents.

In the professional seminars, learning experiences were integrated conceptually around a series of interrelated themes. Each thematic unit had specific emphasis with a body of knowledge to be learned and professional skills to be acquired. The content of these themes was explored through weekly readings requiring student responses, discussion periods in which participants examined, articulated and theorized their experiences and beliefs as teachers, and role-play tasks which required the participants to rehearse and experiment with the language necessary to effectively communicate in English with students, parents, fellow teachers, and administrators.

As the pilot bridging program was designed as a partnership between the University of Calgary, the Calgary Board of Education and the Calgary Catholic School District, an integral part of this collaboration was the professional knowledge base and expertise each could offer the program. The program integrated a lecture series offered to Education students at the University into the course design. This weekly lecture focused on the historical context of education in Canada and offered the participants the opportunity to dialogue with other prospective teachers. The local boards of education provided most of the expert guest speakers on curricular and programming topics, offered input into the employability module and supplied partner teachers the opportunity to work with the students in practicum placements. Two workshops were delivered on inter-cultural communication, strategies for effective mentoring, giving effective feedback and writing evaluation letters for the foreign-prepared teachers. The Catholic District offered their own workshops for the partner teachers designed around their religious focus.

Curriculum

The curriculum of the pilot bridging program included integrated classroom and practicum experiences focused around weekly themes. The educational content components of the course were designed to address the KSAs (Knowledge, Skills and Attributes) provided in the *Teaching Quality Standard Applicable to the Provision of Basic Education in Alberta* document. These served as the foundation for the weekly themes and provided the basis for teacher development activities. The *Teaching Quality Standard* (TQS) states that teachers in Alberta must be able

When I think about teaching, it's like a fish in the water. I feel that I am a fish and I can't live without water. So I enjoy it.

to demonstrate the following knowledge, skills and attributes related to an Interim Professional Certificate:

a) Contextual variables affect teaching and learning.

b) The structure of the Alberta Education System.

c) The purposes of the Guide to Education and Programs of Study germane to the specialization or subject disciplines they are prepared to teach.

d) The subject disciplines they teach.

e) All students can learn, albeit at different rates and in different ways.

f) The purposes of short, medium and long term range planning.

g) Students' needs for physical, social, cultural and psychological security.

h) The importance of respecting students' human dignity.

i) There are many approaches to teaching and learning.

j) The functions of traditional and electronic teaching/learning technologies.

k) The purposes of student assessment.

l) The importance of engaging parents purposefully and meaningfully.

m) Student learning is enhanced through the use of home and community resource.

n) The importance of contributing.

o) The importance of career-long learning.

p) The importance of guiding their actions with a personal, overall vision of the purpose of teaching.

q) They are expected to achieve the *Teaching Quality Standard*.

These variables became the foundation for the content of the pilot course. A number of classroom tasks were set for the participating teachers to address and explore these variables through weekly case studies and topics. *(Please see the appendix for the completed weekly topics and relevant learning tasks for the pilot BPFPT).*

Key Stakeholders

The key stakeholders in a program for foreign-prepared teachers are post-secondary institutions, local school boards, professional regulatory organizations and government departments. Post-secondary institutions have the ability to collaborate with Alberta Education regarding teacher certification. Advanced Education plays an approval and advisory role in the development of the program. Their role is to apply for accreditation of the course and supply expertise in course content and delivery. Government departments can be an important source of funding to support the program. Local school boards can share knowledge of the specific skill set necessary for teachers to be employable in schools, and can offer veteran teachers to mentor foreign-prepared-teachers during practicum placements.

Other stakeholders in a bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers may be found in local communities, such as immigrant servicing agencies, immigrant language evaluation centres and multicultural resource centres. These organizations may assist in the identification of teacher/participants, in evaluating the English-language proficiency of candidates with formal assessment tools, and in promoting the course to local immigrant communities.

> *“When I am in my classroom most of the time I feel confident but sometimes I feel that I don’t have the word that fits very well and use alternatives, synonyms for that word, but I didn’t have the right word. So that I might think that if I had the right words I would have been in a better position to explain this to students.”*

Stakeholder Roles, Responsibilities and Agreements

To maximize the quality of a program for foreign-prepared teachers, written agreements and partnerships between all stakeholders should be created for both the administration and implementation of the course. While local school boards hold important knowledge of the practical day-to-day aspects of teaching, post-secondary institutions are important centres of research and theoretical components of teaching practice. Professional regulatory organizations and government departments are important sources of knowledge about current requirements for teacher certification for foreign-prepared teachers and of evolving labour market needs. Government agencies can also serve as a source of potential funding for the program. Supportive, formal partnerships where all parties make important contributions to the program are ideal.

Local school authorities can offer the time and expertise of partner schools and teachers for the practicum components, as well as expertise from curriculum and other specialists to give presentations to students on various course topics such as the Alberta Programs of Study, inclusive education, and English Language Learners, Assessment for Learning, etc. They can also develop a partner-teacher orientation and training program to facilitate cross-cultural understanding and communication between the partner-teachers and foreign-prepared teachers. Local school boards can assist in identifying candidates for the program through internal advertising and promotion of the program and offer important information and support related to employment.

Post-secondary teacher preparation institutions advise and register students for the foreign-prepared teacher program. They assist in the administration of the program through recruiting and interviewing candidates, securing practicum placements, and hiring an instructor and field advisor. If possible, the post-secondary can offer access to their website for hosting an on-line component of the course. Specific content expertise from post-secondary institutions can also contribute to the course on various topics. Post-secondary institutions may also create a research agenda focused on the experiences of foreign-prepared teachers and form partnerships with other student groups in their Bachelor of Education programs. Post-secondary institutions can work together with Alberta Education to ensure that the course meets current upgrading requirements for foreign-prepared teachers for certification. They can also work with Advanced Education to ensure that the course meets requirements for advanced education university accreditation.

To ensure the contributions, roles and responsibilities between all partners in the bridging course are fully understood and adhered to, written agreements should be drafted and signed by all stakeholders. Written agreements can outline the financial and in-kind contributions, the decision-making processes, and the management duties of the program partners. These written agreements can form the basis of the relationship between the partners and should specify the terms, conditions and contributions of the partners in the promotion, delivery and evaluation of the program.

In addition to the written agreements between partners, proposals for funding and grants should be completed in a collaborative nature so that all stakeholders have input into the course design and dissemination of funds. This collaboration can support the financial sustainability of the program while ensuring the course is relevant to changing certification requirements and labour market needs.

Required Resources and Texts

The following resources can be used in a bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers. In addition, a variety of articles can supplement these texts and be read, discussed and presented in class.

SUGGESTED STUDENT TEXTS:

- Alberta Education, (1997). *Teaching Quality Standard: Applicable to the Provision of Basic Education in Alberta.* Alberta: Queens Printer.
- Bennett, B. & Rolheiser, C. (2001). *Beyond Monet: The Artful Science of Instructional Integration.* Toronto: Bookation Inc.
- *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School, Expanded Edition.* (2000). Washington D.C.: National Academy of Press.
- *Success for All Learners: A Handbook for Differentiating Instruction.* (1996). Manitoba Education and Training.
- Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design.* New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

ADDITIONAL TEXTS THAT CAN BE USED AS RESOURCES:

- Biehler, R, Snowman, J, D'Amico, M. & Schmid, R. (1999) *Psychology Applied to Teaching.* Toronto: International Thomsom Publishing (ITP).
- Brookfield, S. (1995). *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Coehlo, E. (2004). *Adding English: A Guide to Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms.* Toronto: Pippin Publishing Corp.
- Davies, A., Herbst, S. & Parrot Reynolds, B. (2008). *Leading the Way to Making Classroom Assessment Work.* Courtney, BC: Connections Publishing.
- McTighe, J. & Wiggins, G. (2004). *Understanding by Design Professional Development Workbook.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Tomlinson, C.A. & Imbeau, M. (2010) *Leading and Managing in a Differentiated Classroom.* Alexandria, VA.: ASCD.

> “I have had great experiences. I never feel ashamed in asking my other colleagues or even my students if I need to know something, and that's how you grow. If you think that you already know something or you are superior then it's hard to grow.”

- Tomlinson, C.A. (2003). *Fulfilling the Promise of the Differentiated Classroom.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Tomlinson, C.A. (2001). *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms – 2nd Edition.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Tomlinson, C.A. & McTughe, J. (2006). *Integrating Differentiated Instruction and Understading By Design.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Woolfolk, A., Winne, P. & Perry, N. (2005). *Educational Psychology, 3rd Canadian Edition.* Toronto: Pearson Education Canada.

Strategies for Developing English Language Proficiency for Teaching

All of the teachers in the pilot program had their English language proficiency measured formally through the Calgary Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment Centre (ILVARC) before acceptance into the program. The formal measure used to evaluate language proficiency by ILVARC in reading, writing, speaking and listening was the Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test (CLBPT). This formal assessment tool is commonly used by immigrant service agencies to place adult immigrants into English as a Second Language (ESL) programs throughout Canada. The results of this initial language assessment assisted both the instructor and students in identifying the areas of strength and need in their communicative competence and to determine whether or not the candidates for the program had sufficient English language skills to successfully fulfill course requirements. This measure was also used at the end of the program to evaluate growth in English language proficiency over the six months of the course.

Language proficiency in written communication was developed in the course through specifically designed tasks authentic to the teaching profession such as writing lesson plans, letters to parents, creating assessment rubrics, writing reflective journals, summaries and emails, creating newsletters, a professional resume and their personal philosophy of teaching. The participants were required to keep a self-directed language learning journal, to produce two curriculum projects which required the students to design and to write and self-evaluate a unit of study in their field based on the Alberta Programs of Study. Grammatical issues, use of appropriate genre and vocabulary were developed within the context of these student-generated writing tasks.

Reading skills were developed through the professional articles and literature in which the teachers read each week in the classroom component of the course. From these readings teachers were required to summarize, identify main ideas, analyze, and to provide written responses. Examination of current educational literature required the participants to frequently explore alternative and expanded perspectives on educational topics. The weekly readings served as a basis from which the teachers could develop educational vocabulary specific to the Canadian teaching context, as well as serve as a springboard to discussions and reflections about current educational practice in Canada.

Oral language skills were addressed in the classroom component through a performance-based curricular approach to professional language proficiency. Role-play scenarios required the teachers to actively participate in dialogues requiring professional problem-solving skills. The teachers were required to demonstrate a growing understanding of the cultural nuances of professional teacher communication through a variety of situations posed by the scenarios. Pair and small group work on pedagogical tasks, as well as accurate reviewing of oral information received from guest presenters and individual oral presentations also served to develop the teachers' ability to comprehend, interpret and respond to the professional language of teaching. The students were also required to give a number of presentations to the class which were both peer and self-evaluated throughout the course.

> *One of the key elements of the reflective process of the program is the readings. I really enjoyed spending long hours immersed in them, exploring interesting topics such as how to become critically reflective and tactful in our thinking, and how to draw big questions that guide and engage the students in their learning discovery.*

Oral language proficiency was developed through the field experience component of the pilot course when the participating teachers received feedback on their language use for teaching in an authentic context from both their partner teacher and field advisor. Two lessons in each practicum placement were videotaped and given to the teacher for their personal viewing. In order to encourage self-directed language learning, the participating teachers used these videos as an opportunity to analyze their use of language to communicate and teach, as well as their teaching behaviours and non-verbal communication skills. Through systematic analysis over time, these videos gave the participants an opportunity to identify areas of growth and to set goals for their English language communication and instructional skills. Self-assessments of videotaped practicum lessons were added in the participants' reflective journals and the DVDs of their teaching were added to the participants' Practicum Portfolios.

An Employability Skills Module

As recommended in other programs for teachers with international qualifications, the BPFPT concluded the course with a module on employability skills to assist the participating teachers in building professional portfolios, understand culturally specific work etiquette, as well as develop their skills for interviewing and applying for teaching jobs. The Human Resource Departments and school district were consulted on the content and structure of the pilot course and both gave information to the participants on the application and hiring processes for their school boards.

Mock interviews (two for each participating teacher) were held during the last week of the course with retired school principals. Teachers were given feedback from these interviews on both their ability to appropriately answer questions and effectively communicate their ideas. Also during this week, teachers were assisted in updating their resumes with an appropriate format, writing letters of introduction and in filling out applications for teaching positions with local school boards. They each created a professional portfolio to take with them to interviews as evidence of their skills, knowledge and experiences in teaching.

Participant Demographics

The twenty teachers accepted into the pilot program represented the countries of origin of Bulgaria, Colombia, Gaza, Ghana, Hungary, India, Israel, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Romania, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, and the United Kingdom.

The teachers in the program represented a variety of language backgrounds and subject area specializations including Mathematics, Music, Elementary & Early Childhood, Montessori, Chemistry, Biology, Home Economics & Design, English, Physical Education, Physics, Engineering, French and Spanish. All of the teachers held a Bachelor of Education degree from their home countries. In addition, seven out of the twenty teachers held Master's degrees and two of the teachers had PhDs obtained outside of Canada.

The University of Calgary awarded fifteen credits (five 3-credit courses) for the course to program participants who did not have an *Interim Professional Certificate*. All program participants who successfully completed the program and received a certificate of completion.

Length of Pilot Project

In keeping with the model for the TAC program, the pilot course offered 360 hours of classroom instruction and 360 hours of practicum teaching, for a total of 720 hours over 24 weeks (six months). Teachers were recruited and interviewed for the pilot of the program in spring of 2010 and a cohort of twenty participants began in September 2010.

Pilot Project Impacts and Outcomes

There were twenty participants enrolled in the BPFPT pilot in September 2010, and one participant left the program at the beginning of Feb 2011. The remaining nineteen teachers successfully completed the course.

At the end of the program, ten of the nineteen teachers applied to a school district for employment, six passed the screening interviews and were accepted for employment. Three of the teachers who did not pass the screening interviews obtained employment in other educational settings, either public or private. Those teachers who completed the pilot program but had not yet applied for teaching positions in schools generally were waiting to complete outstanding coursework to meet certification requirements, and/or to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) to demonstrate their English language proficiency. Fourteen of the nineteen teachers who completed the program met all of the requirements for an Alberta Interim Teaching Certificate at the completion of the course.

CHAPTER 4

CHAPTER 4

Program Model for Offering a Foreign-Prepared Teacher Program in Alberta

Purposes

The pilot Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers demonstrated the many important functions that a professional bridge to certification and employment program can serve in Alberta.

Firstly, a fully integrated course containing both theoretical and practical experiences for foreign-prepared teachers can assist teachers in meeting a large number of the upgrading requirements for teacher certification established by Alberta Education in educational coursework and practicum teaching. It can also allow this coursework to be specifically designed to bridge some of the gaps in professional knowledge and skills of foreign-prepared teachers have been identified as lacking by Alberta school boards. It can cover a range of topics in a relatively condensed period of time, which ultimately is more cost-effective and timely for teachers.

Secondly, a full-time, specially designed program for foreign-prepared teachers allows for greater development of specific English language competency for teaching. Teaching, as with all other professions, has a distinct and contextually bound vocabulary and language domain associated with it. The oral language domain of teaching is inordinately broad – containing oral discourses with a range of stakeholders, including parents, students, colleagues and superiors. The written domain of teaching includes both formal writing (letters to parents and community organizations, lesson and unit planning, narrative assessments of student performance, parent newsletters, curriculum development, completion of Individual Program Plans (IPP's), Professional Growth Plans, etc.) and informal writing (emails to colleagues and students, notes to substitutes, feedback to students, etc.) Through combining explicit instruction in both the oral and written language genres commonly used by teachers in Alberta schools, a program specifically designed for foreign-prepared teachers addresses language proficiency in a more contextually relevant and practical manner than individual post-secondary courses can offer.

A professional bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers can focus on the culturally specific approaches to education typically found in Alberta. Other courses in teacher development assume a common understanding and experience base in Canadian educational systems by its participants. It is important for foreign-prepared teachers to have opportunities to unpack some of the cultural norms and expectations found in Alberta schools. The roles and responsibilities of teachers may be quite different from their home countries and therefore it is important that time is allotted for identifying culturally specific norms of communication, collegial and pedagogic relationships, and professional behaviour in schools. To develop cultural understanding of the Canadian teaching context, implicit behaviours and attitudes found in schools must be made explicit and explored.

Finally, a program for foreign-prepared teachers serves to create a professional network and support system for teachers new to Alberta. A program specifically designed to address their needs in a community of other individuals with similar issues and challenges offers opportunities for the development of lasting friendships and professional relationships. These bonds can serve as a continuous support network for foreign-prepared teachers when they finish the program and transition into Alberta schools.

Outcomes and Benefits

Upon completion of a professional bridging program foreign-prepared teachers will have:

- a smoother and more seamless transition to certification and employment in Alberta schools. The course may completely fulfill their requirements for certification, or have put them much closer to their target than individual courses would have;
- an understanding of current pedagogy and practice, while offering important learning experiences which model these practices;

> *So knowledge of students from elementary and junior high is very important. You have to know really, really the students of different age and the pedagogical practice in different levels of school. We were a little bit specialized in our home country.*

  - extended time to develop and practice teaching skills alongside a Canadian teacher;
  - formal important connections and networking within the local school boards;
  - a much clearer understanding of the culture of Canadian schools, the roles and responsibilities of teachers in Alberta and of the Alberta Programs of Study;
  - increased professional language skills necessary to communicate effectively both orally and in writing about educational topics to a variety of stakeholders including, colleagues, administrators, parents and students;
  - a professional portfolio containing letters from partner teachers and the instructor of the course, as well as other evidence of their local teaching experiences. This portfolio will put the participating foreign-prepared teachers in a strong position to show school boards that they have demonstrated their ability to teach in a Canadian context;
- preparation to interview successfully for teaching positions and a contextually relevant resume and professional portfolio. Experiences offered in this course will allow foreign-prepared teachers to be more fully prepared to successfully obtain employment as teachers in Alberta.

Costs

There are a number of expected costs involved with a program for foreign-prepared teachers. Some of these costs include:

- Administrative costs (registration, interviewing, overseeing program operations, financial accounting);
- Capital costs (technology – Smart Boards, laptops, digital video camera);
- Operational costs (instructor & field advisor salaries, books, materials, publicity materials, room rental, photocopying);
- Optional expenses: (guest presenter honoraria, honoraria for partner teachers, teacher convention registrations, and bursaries for program participants.

The costs incurred during the six-month pilot program were:

- Administrative costs: approximately $50,000
- Capital Costs: $15,000
- Operational costs: $50,000
- Optional expenses: $185,000

Funding

The operating costs for the pilot program were covered from a grant given by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) through the Canada-Alberta Enhanced Language Training for Skilled Immigrants fund. This joint federal/provincial program supports professional bridging programs for new Canadians that include the components that address development of professional language, communication and employability skills.

Each teacher was offered a scholarship of $1250 per month for the six months of the course to offset the costs and loss of income during the course. The scholarship was covered through a grant offered by Alberta Education to support the pilot. This scholarship proved to be a valuable support for the participants, as many of them had to give up employment to attend the fulltime course.

Staffing

An Instructor is needed for the classroom portion of the course. This person ideally should have relevant K-12 teaching experience, an advanced degree in education, experience and training in teacher preparation, teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Intercultural Communication. Familiarity and experience with local school boards would also be beneficial.

A Field Advisor is needed to supervise the practicum placements. This person should have an advanced degree in education, experience and training in teacher preparation and supervision. Familiarity with the local school boards would also be beneficial.

> *There are so many things that are different – the inclusive classroom, the diversity of resources, the diversity in the classroom…you know, you have to meet all the learning needs of the students in the classroom, those were really new to me.*

Coordinators and/or administrators from post-secondary institutions and local school boards are needed to manage organizational tasks such as program accounting, ordering course materials, arranging practicum placements, writing proposals for grants/funding, promoting the course through hosting informational meetings and print publicity, attending interviews with teacher-candidates, submitting paperwork, liaising with stakeholders such as Alberta Education and Advanced Education, etc.

Course Design and Syllabus

Fundamental to the design of a bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers program is the critical integration of both theoretical and practical understandings of teaching and learning, as well as opportunities for the development of the specific language and communication skills required of teachers in Alberta. Alberta Education's *Teaching Quality Standard* (TQS) should be used as a means to develop the content of the theoretical parts of this professional bridging program. Ideas for weekly content themes along with suggested activities to support these are included in the following section.

**Detailed curriculum from the pilot program "Weeks at a Glance" (ideas and additional resources for weekly content themes) and the course syllabus are attached in the Appendices.*

Proposed Weekly Content Themes

- Uncovering Our Assumptions about Teaching and Learning
- Inquiry-Based Approaches to Teaching
- Theories of Learning and Development
- Culture, Diversity and Education
- Developing Effective Learning Environments
- Emotional Intelligence/Conflict
- Inclusive Teaching Practices – ESL and Aboriginal Education
- Inclusive Teaching Practices – Special Needs & Gifted

- Assessment (formative and summative)
- Instructional Design/Lesson Planning
- Creating Collaborative Learning Environments/Instructional Strategies
- Differentiating Instruction
- Integrating Technology into Teaching
- Alberta Programs of Study Curricular Areas

Suggested Course Requirements for Students:

A PRACTICUM PORTFOLIO

A professional portfolio is a tool to promote professional growth. It is a structured and thoughtfully organized collection of artefacts, which illustrates the teachers' skills and abilities through samples of student work, reflective writing, and conversation with peers, partner teachers and the Field Advisor. Developing Practicum Portfolios can be an important task that allows the foreign-prepared teachers to chronicle and relate their teaching experiences in Alberta. A practicum portfolio could be completed in paper format or as an e-portfolio. (A sample of the Practicum Guide used the pilot program can be found in the Appendices of this report).

A LEARNING JOURNAL

A learning journal provides a place in which participants can record, question, reflect, observe and communicate with their partner teacher and instructor in writing about the things they are learning during the course. Learning Journals should be interactive – the instructor may pose specific questions to the students that they can answer in their journals, and partner teachers may ask the teacher to note specific observations or ideas in their journals or use it as a means to communicate ideas. The journals are meant to be a place for professional thinking and reflection – not just describing events. As this kind of reflective writing may be new to foreign-prepared teachers, a guide for reflective writing should be given to the teachers before they begin their journals. Learning journals can also be the place where the teachers keep notes and ideas from lectures, school observation, guest speakers, professional readings, case seminars, group tasks and class learning activities throughout the course.

> *"You have to be patient and try to get the best out of it. If you are in a place and you are only there for the practicum, whatever two weeks, three weeks, two months, learn the most you can learn. Get involved. This is the opportunity to learn, don't waste it. Get the best out of it."*

A SELF-DIRECTED LANGUAGE LEARNING JOURNAL

As the development of language and communication skills specific to teaching is an integral part of a professional bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers, participants can be responsible for identifying what they feel to be their primary needs in developing their English-language skills for teaching. Self-directed language learning journals offer an opportunity for foreign-prepared teachers to gain commitment to and ownership of their language learning. It provides an opportunity for the participating teachers to gain understanding of themselves as language learners in terms of their beliefs about their language use, and understanding of their cultural identity and what it means to become an intercultural speaker. This journal provides a means for the teachers to identify the skills and strategies necessary for their continuous and independent language learning.

A plan can be identified at the beginning of the program and students can review their progress and re-assess their language learning goals throughout the course. The self-directed language-learning journal may address any of the areas of language production (speaking, listening, reading or writing) or some combination of all. The instructor can conference and consult each student on a monthly basis regarding language learning goals, development and progress.

Participants can be videotaped once a semester in their practicum teaching placements. In order to encourage self-directed language learning, participating teachers can use these videos as an opportunity to analyze their use of language to communicate and teach, as well as their teaching behaviours. Through systematic analysis, these videotapes give participants an opportunity to identify areas of strength and need in terms of their own English language proficiency, communication and instructional skills.

Some of the areas that can be explored in a self-directed language learning for foreign-prepared teachers are:

- Comparisons and contrasts of their native language with that of the target language (this can include communication styles/body language, phonology, grammar points, vocabulary, culturally-embedded elements of the language – formality, informality);

- Reflections/self-assessment of videotaped presentations on pedagogical topics (pronunciation, intonation, speed, body language, sociolinguistic communication skills, overall communicability);
- Reflections/self-assessments of videotaped teaching segments (pronunciation, intonation, speed, body language, questioning skills, wait time, oral reinforcement and managing discussions, sociolinguistic communication skills, overall communicability);
- Reflections/self-evaluations of spoken language in taped sequences (e.g. using computer audio-recording software) (Pronunciation, intonation, speed, overall communicability);
- Setting and re-setting language goals based on formative analysis of artefacts, produced work, personal communication and peer feedback;
- Self-evaluation of achievement of language learning goals;
- Analysis of written texts read in the course through synthesizing, summarizing and interpreting and responding.

> *“If you're not too organized and you don't know exactly what you are doing, the kids are not patient. They want this teacher to be ready. You can't waste a minute. You should know exactly what to do, how to put them into groups, how to get them to work.”*

WEEKLY CONTRIBUTIONS TO AN ON-LINE DISCUSSION BOARD

A fundamental goal of a bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers is to give the participants greater knowledge, experience and understanding of the use of technology as a tool for teaching and learning. With this in mind, a blended approach to the course (an on-line component) can enhance the teachers' understanding and use of technology as a teaching and learning tool. All of the course materials (with the exception of the texts) could be put on this site, as well as resources, copies of presentations, and a Discussion Board for each weekly theme. Participating teachers could be required to submit a response, comment, question or observation to the Discussion Board each week. All teachers could be required to check the course site for announcements, forms, or on-line readings on each topic regularly. If used as a component of the course, the instructor should orientate the teachers how to use the site at the beginning of the course.

A BIOGRAPHY OF LEARNING

Throughout the program, participants can use the interactive texts from their on-line postings, Practicum Portfolios, Learning Journals and Self-Directed Language

Learning Journals as a means to identify what has been significant in their growth as a teacher throughout the program. The summative reflection of all of the learning experiences in the program at the end of each semester can be combined to create a "Biography of Learning" represented through metaphor.

A Biography of Learning is a retrospective narrative account where the teachers clearly articulate significant aspects of their learning history in the bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers. This work is an important opportunity for the teacher to connect their experience and knowledge in the course and to extend the power of both. The metaphors of the teachers can be used to provide "glimpses" of the developing conceptions of teaching that are held by these individuals. The metaphors of prospective teachers are determined, at least in part, by their experiences and thus reflect elements of their personal histories.

A Biography of Learning could be shared with the group in the form or format decided by the teacher at the end of each semester through a presentation to their peers in an oral presentation. The format of this presentation could be a description of the work, a poem, song, poster, sculpture, image, PowerPoint or video presentation, etc. (Samples Biographies of Learning are attached in the Appendices)

AN INDIVIDUAL INQUIRY PROJECT

A written inquiry related to some aspect of teaching or learning that the participants would like to research could be a required assignment of a bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers. The purpose of this task is to allow the participants to delve deeply into a topic of interest, share this work with others, and have an opportunity to develop and/or refine the teacher's skills in the genre of academic writing.

The final form of this inquiry could be a written research paper of approximately five-to-ten typed pages, including appropriate formatting and citations of all resources used. Samples of correct citing of sources should be provided to participants who may be unfamiliar with appropriate format for written academic work. Final papers should be evaluated according to their integration of theory and practice, and to their significance and benefit to the knowledge base of the participant/researcher.

These individual inquiry projects could be posted on the class on-line site to be shared to the learning community and/or shared orally with the class when finished. (A sample Inquiry Project from the pilot program is included in the Appendices of this report).

CASE STUDY SEMINAR LEADER(S)

Weekly themes can be presented initially through the study of cases that present real-life learning and teaching scenarios and issues to be analyzed, debated, and perhaps resolved. Casework offers a series of complex topics that may arise in a Canadian educational milieu. Examination of these may require participants to explore alternative perspectives from their previous paradigms of teaching.

Participants could be required each week to generate weekly written responses to the weekly themes in their Learning Journals to support their participation in the seminars surrounding these cases. During these discussions, participants can draw upon their past experience, previous reading and ongoing reading of the literature, and their pedagogical intuition to guide them. Through careful preparation, participants share the responsibility with the leader for the quality of the case discussions.

The role of the case leader is to prepare questions for the group, lead the participants through a thoughtful discussion of the main themes arising from the case text. At the end of the case discussion, the participants leading the seminar should summarize the discussion, paying close attention to the possibilities for action suggested. Case Seminar leaders will pose questions, call on participants and ensure that the discussion remains focused and productive.

FIELD SEMINAR LEADER(S)

At the end of each week, a seminar can be held to examine through careful systematic inquiry what is occurring in the field, and from that to create a deeper understanding of learning, teaching, curriculum and life in schools. Students can be assigned to lead the field discussions in a manner similar to the Case Study Seminars.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Oral presentations are an excellent means for the teachers to develop their oral language proficiency skills for teaching. These may incorporate multimedia, technology, other visuals such as graphs, illustrations or pictures, may be interactive or lecture style, or may be structured as a group discussion or role play. These presentations can be either formally, peer and/or self-evaluated. They can be videotaped for the teachers to allow them to self-evaluate their presentation and

> *Yes, I've changed, because through the experiences I have had, I found different ways to teach the subjects, different ways to engage students. It's changing all the time.*

oral language skills. Suggested topics related to weekly themes in the program can include:

- *Who do you think you are? A personal biography of teaching and learning*
- *On a learning theorist*
- *On an instructional strategy and/or assessment technique*
- *Individual Inquiry Projects*
- *Biography of Learning at the end of each semester*

Assessment

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve teaching and learning practices. As such, assessment is based on three questions:

- Where is the work strong?
- How can the work be improved?
- What can you do next to strengthen your work and that of others?

Evaluation of the participants of a bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers should focus on the three main components of the course: language proficiency for teaching, classroom coursework and practicum teaching. Evaluation and feedback by the instructor, as well as self and peer assessment, should occur in an ongoing basis throughout the course. (Samples of the evaluations of teachers in the pilot program can be found in the Appendices of this report).

Evaluating Language Proficiency

STANDARDIZED MEASURES

Until a tool is developed that specifically evaluates language proficiency for teachers, a standardized test of general language proficiency, such as the Canadian Language Benchmarks ELTPT, can be used to measure pre and post language skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. This formal tool must be administered in an official Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) by a trained CLB assessor.

INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION

The instructor in the course can use the oral presentations and videotaped practice teaching segments to give feedback to the teachers on their oral language proficiency and development (see the Oral Presentation Rubric in the Appendix). Written language can be evaluated throughout the course on class tasks such as the Inquiry Project (see the rubric for the Inquiry papers in the Appendix) Biography of Learning, and other individual assignments.

PEER EVALUATION

Peer evaluation rubrics (see appendix) can be used during group tasks and oral presentations to offer feedback to the teachers on their oral communication and presentations skills throughout the course.

> *Oh, my best experience in teaching I have to say was with my students. That was a good feeling when they could show me they learned a lot a lot in an area that I never taught. That gave me really good satisfac*

SELF-EVALUATION

The videotaped segments of teaching practice, as well as videotaped oral presentations can be used to assist foreign-prepared teachers identify their growth and areas of need in their oral language proficiency. The Self-Directed Language Learning Journal can also be used to assist the teachers is developing language learning goals and to evaluate their ongoing progress towards those goals throughout the course.

Evaluating Classroom Coursework

INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION

The forms of assessment and feedback to the participants from the instructor on the classroom component of the bridging program can be given in the following ways:

- Verbal feedback on daily classroom activities, oral presentations and teaching sequences and role-play scenarios;
- Written response to participants' entries on the on-line Discussion Board threads;
- Written responses to the Learning Journal, the Biography of Learning and Practicum Portfolios;

- A narrative written assessment of participants' teaching in field placements and the quality of work in the professional seminars;
- Written evaluations of teaching practice from formal observations in the practicums.

SELF-EVALUATION

Self-assessment should be an ongoing and integrated part of all classroom tasks in the bridging program. A summative evaluation of the participants' work in the classroom component of the course would be found in their Biographies of Learning, presented at the end of each semester.

Evaluating Practicum Teaching

EVALUATIONS FROM THE PARTNER TEACHERS

Successful completion of the practicum by the participating teachers would be made by the instructor in consultation with the partnering teachers. A written narrative assessment would be completed by partner teachers in the participants' practicum placements. These narrative assessments are very important to the foreign-prepared teachers as they serve as evidence of their teaching practice in Canadian schools. The comments given by partner teachers in their narrative assessments can include the following areas:

- The development of professional relationships between the partner teacher, students, co-workers and administration;
- Proficiency and use of the curriculum;
- The cultivation of an effective learning environment;
- The quality and preparation for teaching;
- The professional value of the materials used in practice teaching;
- The level of professionalism in the working environment;
- The ability to reflect critically on teaching-learning transactions;
- The progress towards professional aims;
- Proficiency in using English and sociolinguistic skills to effectively communicate to students, co-workers, parents, and school administrator.

EVALUATIONS FROM THE INSTRUCTOR

The instructor should give ongoing verbal feedback to the teachers throughout their practicums, especially during post-lesson conferences with teachers. Written feedback could include comments on teacher lesson and unit planning, written evaluations of at least two formal lesson observations in each practicum placement, a summative semester evaluation which includes an evaluation of the practicum teaching experiences and outlining goals for future teaching, and a final written narrative evaluation of each teacher-participant at the end of the course. (Examples of instructor and partner teacher narrative evaluations are included in the Appendices).

SELF-EVALUATION

Ongoing reflection and self-evaluation is an integral part of teacher development. Avenues for self-evaluation could be found in the teachers' Learning Journals, self-evaluations of their teaching lessons in formal observations from videotaped sequences, and in the *Teaching Quality Standar*d (TQS) Table found in their Practicum Portfolios. This document asks each teacher to find evidence in their teaching practice during their practicums of meeting each of the sixteen elements found in the Alberta *Teaching Quality Standar*d (TQS). Through the use of this TQS table, foreign-prepared teachers can self-evaluate their ability to meet the Knowledge, Skills and Attributes found in the TQS, the standards for teachers in Alberta. (A copy of the TQS Table can be found in the Practicum Guide in the Appendices).

Accreditation Requirements and Credits Offered

There are currently two other similar bridging programs being offered in Canada for foreign-prepared teachers at this time. One is the Professional Qualifications Program (PQP), which is a collaboration with British Columbia College of Teachers and Simon Fraser University's Faculty of Education. This is a twelve-month program comprised of a combination of seminars and in-school experiences. Teachers who complete this course have 36 credit hours recognized towards certification. The PQP takes approximately twenty to twenty-four students per year into their course.

The University of Manitoba offers a similar fulltime program called the Academic Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Teachers (ABPIET) and accepts twelve to fifteen students per year. In this program there is university coursework,

> *I can say the most important pillar of teaching is how you manage the class. It doesn't matter whether they are from different nations – kids are kids. They are the same. Emphasis on classroom management is necessary.*

in-school placements, mentoring, employment skills, and language development. The program lasts approximately fourteen months and offers thirty credit hours.

The pilot Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers (BPFPT) offered in Calgary during the 2010-2011 school year awarded fifteen credits (five half-courses) through the University of Calgary. The teachers who completed the program had a completed professional portfolio containing at least three letters that reflected their Canadian teaching practice (two from practicum placements and one from the instructor of the course) and an updated resume. They also received a certificate of completion for the course that acknowledged the number of hours of coursework (360) and the practicum (360) completed during the program.

Selection Criteria for Teacher Candidates

It is important that the selection of candidates for a bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers involves a process that supports their potential for success. The process should begin with an application form that confirms the applicant's prior teacher training and experience, their immigration status and their evaluation by Alberta Education for teacher certification. This will ensure that the bridging program will meet their needs for certification and employment in Alberta.

Criteria for selection of applicants to a bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers should be based upon their:

- Status as permanent residents or citizens of Canada (evidenced through documentation);
- Initial teacher education and preparation having been completed outside of North America (evidenced through documentation);
- Evaluation from Alberta Education regarding their prior education and practice as teachers before arriving in Canada and coursework required to fulfill requirements for Alberta teaching certification (evidenced through documentation);
- Language proficiency and ability to communicate effectively in English (demonstrated through formal assessments such as the TOEFL and/or CLBPT evaluations and through face-to-face interviews);

- Dedication to the teaching profession and willingness to adapt to a new teaching context (demonstrated through application materials and interviews).

The requirements for English language proficiency for the bridging program should be based upon a reasonable expectation that at the end of the course, teachers could reasonably expect to pass the Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL) requirements established by Alberta Education. As the current requirements for certification in Alberta are a total of 98 on the TOEFL test (27 speaking, 25 writing, 23 listening & reading. This information can be found on-line at: http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/certification/language.aspx.

With expected gains in language proficiency resulting from taking the bridging course, it is reasonable to expect that a previous composite score of 90 on the TOEFL or an average of a Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) assessment of 9 would be appropriate for acceptance to the course.

> *I would say to take on new tasks, new challenges. Never compare what is happening now with what has happened before in your experience. If you keep comparing here and there you will never change yourself to the new environment.*

After all application materials are collected, a personal interview with the candidates and the course instructor and administrator can further assist in the selection of applicants. This informal interview can help explain the course design and syllabus to the applicants, give the instructor and administrator a chance to better understand the professional and personal history of the applicants, and to informally evaluate the oral communication skills of the applicant. Through a process of interviewing candidates, the bridging program can select those teachers who are most likely to successfully complete the program and who are most ready to transition into the Canadian teaching context in Alberta upon completion.

It is beneficial if the selection of candidates into the program is done by both the teacher preparation program and the school authority. This collaborative approach is effective because it considers both academic and employer perspectives.

Timelines

There are some important considerations in the development of a timeline for a six-month program for foreign-prepared teachers:

- The program is scheduled in parallel with the local school calendar for optimal integration of practicum teaching placements;
- Time is allotted for promotion of the program with stakeholders and community members to ensure prospective applicants have information about the program;
- Time is allotted for screening applications, meeting and interviewing applicants and processing admissions to the program.

A possible timeline for a six-month course beginning in September and finishing in March could be:

APRIL – JUNE

- Advertising the program in local newspapers, community newsletters, with immigrant serving agencies
- Holding an Information Meeting/Open House for candidates
- Distribution of brochures and application forms to local school boards, post-secondary institutions, and local immigrant serving agencies

JULY – AUGUST

- Screening and processing applications
- Interviewing and accepting candidates
- Letters sent to accepted candidates
- Formal pre-course English language proficiency assessment of accepted candidates
- Securing practicum placements for first practicum

SEPT – DEC

- Course begins – classroom activities (Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays)
- School Observations (3 weeks)
- First Practicum (Wednesdays & Thursdays)

> *After this course I almost don't recognize myself. Before my teaching was more like teacher-centred rather than student-centred, and here I had to change 180 degrees. It took me a lot of time but now I am able to say I am aligned to the Canadian system.*

- Immersion weeks for practicum (last three weeks of the semester)
- End of semester activities and evaluations

JAN – MARCH

- Classrooms activities (Mondays & Fridays)
- Second practicum (Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays)
- Immersion weeks for practicum (last three weeks of the semester)
- End of semester activities and evaluations
- Program evaluation

> *My journey so far has been fun, challenging and adventurous. It has reaffirmed my philosophy of teaching as a lifelong learner.*

Measures of Program Success

As the ultimate purpose of the program is to prepare foreign-prepared teachers to become certificated and employed as teachers in Alberta, measures of program success should focus on these outcomes. The bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers can be deemed successful if participants who complete the program demonstrate success in:

- Completing the course requirements and practicum components;
- Meeting the English language proficiency requirements for certification in Alberta (TOEFL IBT score of 98);
- Meeting the participants' coursework equivalency requirements by Alberta Education for certification in Alberta;
- Interviewing with local school boards to obtain employment as fulltime or substitute teachers in Alberta schools;
- Retaining employment as teachers after they receive their initial contracts.

Teacher employment is affected by labour market needs and changes in population that fluctuates from year to year. Therefore, a holistic approach to measuring success by all partners of the program is necessary. The Human Resource Departments of local school boards can offer input into the effectiveness of the bridging program in orienting and preparing the teachers to the Alberta educational system after interviewing the foreign-prepared teacher candidates. The participants themselves can evaluate the program's ability to effectively meet their professional needs. Alberta Education can evaluate the content of the course and its ability to offer foreign-prepared teachers the knowledge, skills and attributes to successfully meet upgrading and equivalency requirements for certification. Another possible measure of program success could be determined by the percentage of bridging program participants who are hired as teachers after the program, and whether this optimally reflects that of new graduates of other teacher preparation programs in Alberta. However, true assessment of the outcomes of the program will need to focus on a long-term evaluation that follows the participants and examines their professional experiences after the program finishes.

Characteristics of Successful Participants

Successful participants of the program must meet the requirements for all teachers in Alberta as outlined in the *Teaching Quality Standard* (TQS). These teachers can demonstrate English-language proficiency across a range of communication genres related to teaching with parents, students and their colleagues in schools. They demonstrate a student-centred approach in their practice and reflect upon ways to improve their teaching through feedback they receive from their students and from colleagues. Successful participants are able to form strong relationships with students, parents and colleagues and establish supportive environments for learning. They can plan for and implement effective tasks that allow their students to meet the outcomes mandated by the Alberta Programs of Study.

Successful participants demonstrate emotional maturity and professionalism. They have a strong understanding of the roles and responsibilities of teachers in Alberta and a keen awareness of school culture and norms. They continually seek to collaborate and learn professionally. Successful participants are able to fully integrate their past experiences and training as teachers into a new teaching context in Alberta. They demonstrate perseverance, tenacity and a positive attitude. They are dedicated to the teaching profession, which they often see as a vocation. They maintain determination to find their way back in schools and classrooms despite the many challenges they face in this endeavour.

CHAPTER 5

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and Future Directions

This resource has reported on the purposes and outcomes of a pilot bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers from September 2010 to March 2011. This program was offered in Calgary, Alberta, through a partnership with the Calgary Board of Education, the Calgary Catholic School District and the University of Calgary. It was based upon the program model of the Transitions to Alberta Classrooms Program (TAC) that was already established in Calgary since 2008. The pilot program was financially supported by Alberta Education who provided a grant for the pilot to address a mandate in *The Education Sector Workforce Planning Framework for Action*, a five-year strategic plan designed to provide proactive solutions to emerging demands in the education sector workforce. The grant from Alberta Education primarily was allocated to offer the teacher-participants a scholarship bursary during the six-month course. Financial support was also provided by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to address administrative costs associated with the program.

Included in this resource are the essential components for offering a bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers in other parts of Alberta. A review of current literature on the needs of immigrant teachers in Alberta offers a foundation from which to ground the design of such a program. Assessment tools, selection criteria of candidates and roles and responsibilities of partners are also important considerations in the design of a professional bridging program for teachers. Based on the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary for teachers identified by the Alberta *Teaching Quality Standard*, ideas for curriculum and learning tasks for this program are included.

The pilot bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers offered in Calgary from September 2010 to March 2011 was a six-month full-time course offered for fifteen credit hours. A review of two other programs for foreign-prepared teachers in Canada (the Professional Qualifications Program at

Simon Fraser and Pilot Program for Internationally Educated Teachers at the University of Manitoba), are offered for longer timeframes (ten months and fourteen months) and for more credits (thirty-six credits and thirty credits). While the ultimate aims and necessary components in these programs are very similar, this reveals that a variety of lengths and designs of such bridging programs are possible.

In addition to the creation of the program are additional resources, policies and practices that schools, school boards, post-secondary institutions and government bodies can produce to support the certification, employment and retention of foreign-prepared teachers. These ideas are offered as supports that fully address the professional needs of foreign-prepared teachers in the Alberta workforce before, during and after they are employed.

> *Each one of us in this program is exactly like that. I see a diverse group of people united with the same goal of becoming a teacher here in Alberta.*

Additional Resources to Support Foreign-Prepared Teachers

A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR FOREIGN-PREPARED TEACHERS IN ALBERTA

Some of the greatest challenges for foreign-prepared teachers are gaining an understanding the certification process in Alberta, understanding other teacher-related careers options available for teachers while they await evaluation of their education from their home countries, understanding the hiring process for teachers, and the available support systems including professional bridging programs for teachers in Alberta. A complete guide to the processes involved in becoming a teacher in Alberta including a list of resources, courses and institutions available for upgrading purposes, may serve to streamline the process of certification and employment for teachers.

This guide could contain information on the requirements for teaching in Alberta, how to apply for certification, where to send their applications, English language requirements, name and addresses of agencies where teachers can improve their English-language skills, where they can find professional resources, where to find financial support for continuing their education and training, and information about provincial regulating authorities and translation services. A complete written resource for foreign-prepared teachers could provide a wealth of information that can specifically address their needs and questions upon arrival to Alberta.

MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS FOR CERTIFICATED FOREIGN-PREPARED TEACHERS

While a program offered by teacher preparation institutions and local school boards for foreign-prepared teachers can address the equivalency and upgrading needs for a certain group of immigrant teachers in Alberta, a mentoring program could address the needs of those foreign-prepared teachers who receive their Alberta Interim Teacher certification but are unable to secure employment as teachers and to also serve as a follow-up support for teachers who complete a professional bridging program for foreign-prepared teachers.

Analysis of the Statistics Canada National Graduate Survey reported that Canada may be losing 15-20% of new teachers in their first five year of teaching (Canadian Teachers' Federation, 2003). Mentoring programs have been found to increase retention and efficacy in new teachers. A mentorship program for foreign-prepared teachers could increase their capacity to integrate successfully into Alberta schools while also supporting newly-hired teachers through the difficult first year of teaching.

A mentorship initiative could include workshops on classroom management, strategies for successful substitute teaching, inclusive teaching practices, differentiated instruction, assessment, how to interview for teaching positions, review of resumes and portfolios, conflict resolution and building positive relationships through clear communication. These workshops would be non-credit and teachers could join the mentorship program at any time throughout the year. This program could be organized and run through local school boards independently or in partnership with a post-secondary institution, and be flexibly organized to utilize existing school professional service units.

A DVD AND HANDBOOK ON FOREIGN-PREPARED TEACHERS TO BE USED FOR OUTREACH AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES BY SCHOOL BOARDS AND POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS.

An informative DVD could explain who foreign-prepared teachers are, describe their specific challenges and gifts, and offer information about the Bridging Program for Foreign-prepared Teachers. It could also address issues of cross-cultural communication in the workplace, diversity and equity in schools. The purpose of this DVD and accompanying handbook would be to inform administrators, partner teachers and other school and post-secondary personnel on the unique backgrounds and characteristics of foreign-prepared teachers. It would also describe the work of the Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers and foster awareness of the valuable resources foreign-prepared teachers bring to Alberta schools.

Policies and Practices that Promote the Employment and Retention of Foreign-Prepared Teachers in Alberta Schools

In addition to the development of a professional bridging program, there are a number of policies and practices that can be adopted by educational stakeholders to facilitate the integration of foreign-prepared teachers in Alberta schools.

Schools can:

- Develop school-level support systems and mentoring programs for newly hired foreign-prepared teachers and substitutes;
- Work toward creating school environments where parents and teachers of all groups are welcome and respected;
- Provide information and access to widely available professional development for foreign-prepared teachers in school districts;
- Create collaborative work environments where novice and veteran teachers communicate and mentor each other and develop strong, supportive professional relationships;
- Establish communication and dialogue with school stakeholders – parents, students and school staff around the benefits of a multicultural, multilingual teaching force. This can include communicating the additional linguistic and cultural skills foreign-prepared teachers bring to school communities.

Schools boards can:

- Examine equity in hiring policies across racial groups, and include recruiting and retention of foreign-prepared teachers in school districts;
- Provide consistent, system-wide training of all school personnel on issues of equity and diversity in the hiring of teachers;
- Provide system-wide training of all school personnel on cross-cultural communication and competency skills;

> *I am really happy because now I am a Canadian teacher, as well as multilingual.*

- Keep statistics on the professional careers of newly hired foreign-prepared teachers. Ask foreign-prepared teachers to self-identify and record their experiences in relation to employment and retention in Alberta schools;
- Implement system-wide training for school based administrators on cultural awareness, issues and challenges for foreign-prepared teachers and in equitable hiring practices.

Post-secondary institutions can:

- Collaborate with local school boards to create bridging programs, other upgrading courses and mentorship programs specifically designed around the professional needs of foreign-prepared teachers. These programs should incorporate an integrated model that addresses communication skills, educational theory and practice and the development of professional networks;
- Help obtain practicum placements for foreign-prepared teachers;
- Ensure that postsecondary instructors and field advisors have an understanding of linguistic and cultural diversity and best practice for working with diverse adult learners;
- Establish a research base on issues of certification, employment and retention of foreign-prepared teachers in Alberta schools;
- Ensure that all pre-service teachers have preparation and training in issues of diversity, multiculturalism and equity in education.

The provincial government can:

- Encourage a comprehensive examination of the hiring and support systems in place in Alberta school boards for foreign-prepared teachers;
- Offer political support for the employment and retention of foreign-prepared teachers in Alberta schools through publicly acknowledging the contributions of foreign-prepared teachers in the professional and social life of Alberta schools;
- Offer financial support for certification, and the development of informational materials and curriculum development for foreign-prepared teachers;
- Work in collaboration with federal funders, such as Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to assist in obtaining funding for bridging programs for foreign-prepared teachers;

- Offer special funding for foreign-prepared teachers for the purposes of assisting with tuition and living costs during upgrading and bridging programs;
- Establish a long-term vision of promoting greater diversity in Alberta's teaching force to drive transformational changes to the hiring practices, social relations and community dynamics in schools.

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COURSE MATERIALS

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Course Overview

INSTRUCTOR

EMAIL

PHONE

LOCATION

TIME

The Professional Rationale:

The primary purpose of the Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers is to help bridge participants to teacher certification and employment and allow participants to work towards excellence in their teaching through the process of **analysis, reflection, discussion and practice**.

As new Canadians who have received their initial teacher training in foreign countries, the Foreign-Prepared Teacher Bridging Program will assist participants to become reflective practitioners who are able to assume the many practical demands of teaching in Canada. The program will allow teachers to enhance their professional competency and understanding of Canadian teaching contexts in terms of:

- Understanding responsibilities to students, parents, colleagues, the profession, and the wider community as a teaching professional;
- understanding the diverse ways in which people learn;
- understanding the legislated, moral and ethical frameworks within which Alberta teachers work;
- being able to deal with complex and sometimes conflicting demands posed by children and their diverse learning needs, evolving curriculum standards and knowledge, and needs of particular contexts of teaching and learning;
- translating the Alberta curriculum content and objectives into meaningful learning activities;
- applying a variety of teaching and learning approaches;
- planning and delivering a range of teaching and learning activities;
- creating and maintaining environments that are conducive to student learning;
- applying a variety of technologies to meet student learning needs;
- gathering and using information about students' learning needs and progress; and
- developing the ability to communicate effectively with the diverse partners involved in education.

Program Design:

The Foreign-Prepared Teacher Bridging Program consists of two essential and integrated components: professional seminars and practicum placements.

In the professional seminars, learning experiences are integrated conceptually around a series of interrelated themes. Each thematic unit has specific emphasis with a body of knowledge to be learned and professional skills to be acquired. The content of these themes will be explored through weekly readings requiring student responses, discussion periods in which participants examine, articulate and theorize their experiences and beliefs as teachers, and role-play tasks requiring participants to rehearse and experiment with the language necessary to effectively communicate in English with students, parents, fellow teachers, and administrators.

Field-oriented experiences provide a context for greater understanding of teaching found in real educational situations. The embedded practicum component provides participants an opportunity to become familiar with the rhythm of Canadian school and classroom life throughout the course of the school year, offer extended time for practice teaching and professional language development for instruction, and have greater access to communication activities specific to the Canadian teaching profession.

Fundamental to the design of the pilot program is the critical integration of both theoretical and practical understandings of teaching and learning, as well as opportunities to develop the specific language and communication skills required of teachers in Canada.

Resources & Texts:

The following texts will be used regularly in the pilot program. In addition, a variety of articles will supplement these texts and be read, discussed and presented in class.

- Alberta Education, (1997). *Teaching Quality Standard: Applicable to the Provision of Basic Education in Alberta*. Alberta: Queens Printer.
- Bennett, B. & Rolheiser, C. (2001). *Beyond Monet: The Artful Science of Instructional Integration*. Toronto: Bookation Inc.
- *Success for All learners: A Handbook for Differentiating Instruction. (1996)*. Manitoba Education and Training.
- Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

Expectations:

1. **Cooperation and Professionalism:**

   Attitudes of responsibility, cooperation and collaboration are required in all aspects of the pilot program. Since the tasks set out in the professional seminars depend upon participants working together, it is essential that participating teachers act as responsible and cooperative group members and fulfill obligations during group tasks.

During the practicum placements, participants are expected to demonstrate a professional, responsible attitude in all aspects of the field experience with their partner teachers and with the greater school community. Participants are expected to negotiate the details of their teaching involvement with partnering teachers, present themselves to their colleagues and students in a professional manner, and to demonstrate conscientious preparation for all teaching assignments.

2. **Attendance:**

Participation in all activities related to the various thematic units of study is mandatory. Failure to fully participate in professional seminars and field based experiences will be reviewed as part of participants' narrative assessments. Participants are advised that evaluations will include their day-to-day performance.

Participants who may be absent from classes or field experiences for particular religious holidays should inform both their partner teachers and instructor in advance that they will not be present that day.

3. **Completion of Assigned Tasks:**

Participating teachers are required to complete all of the assigned tasks for successful completion of the program. The specifics of the written assignments are outlined later in this syllabus.

Successful completion of the field experiences will include:

- Collaborating with the partner teacher on advanced planning for weekly lessons;
- Developing materials and lessons that aim at excellence;
- Sharing materials with the partner teacher;
- Debriefing with the partner teacher on the delivery and success of lessons;
- Team-teaching or assisting partner teachers during time on-site when the partner teacher is in the lead role;
- Teaching lessons based on material you have developed.

Course Requirements:

1. **Practicum Portfolio** (submitted at the end of each semester)

The Practicum Guide was designed to assist in the communication of expectations and responsibilities of the teachers during the two practicums, serve as a means for communication and collaboration with the partner and foreign-prepared teachers, and to serve as the foundation and resource for the creation of a Practicum Portfolio which will be submitted at the end of each semester.

The Practicum Portfolio will become a collection of artifacts from each teacher's journey during their practicum. Included in this portfolio should be:

- A detailed description of the teaching-learning context (class, level, program, goals, etc);
- At least two completed lesson plans and an overview of the learning unit taught;
- Notes from post-lesson debriefing sessions with your practicum teacher;
- Your own reflective evaluations of two lessons;
- A one-page narrative assessment from your partner teacher of your practicum experience and teaching skills;
- The instructor's narrative assessments from two formally observed lessons;
- Your post lesson reflections from formal observations;
- A self-assessment of your language and communication skills for teaching (can be taken from the Self-Directed Language Learning Journal);
- An assessment of the professional relationship established in the workplace with your partner teacher and other colleagues;
- Photographs, pieces of student work, feedback from students on your teaching (when available – please date, describe and interpret the value of these artifacts);
- Any other artifacts/documents you feel are relevant to your practicum experience;
- A self-assessment of your teaching skills, including a detailed description of your perceived strengths, areas of professional growth and professional development goals.

  Suggested guiding questions are provided below to help you create your reflective assessment:

  - What have you come to understand about learning and teaching from your field experiences?
  - How have you grown personally through the experiences?

2. **Self-directed Language Learning Reflective Journal** (submitted at the end of each semester).

   As the development of language and communication skills specific to teaching is an integral part of the program, each student will be responsible for identifying what they feel to be their primary needs in developing their English language skills for teaching. This plan will be identified at the beginning of the course and students will review their progress and re-assess their language learning goals throughout the course. The self-directed language-learning journal may address any of the areas of language production (speaking, listening, reading or writing) or some combination of all. Written reflections of their progress towards language learning goals will be added to each student's Biography of Learning. The instructor will conference and consult each student on a monthly basis regarding language learning goals, development and progress.

Participants will be videotaped once a semester in their practicum teaching placements. In order to encourage self-directed language learning, participating teachers will use these videos as an opportunity to analyze their use of language to communicate and teach, as well as their teaching behaviors. Through systematic analysis, these videotapes will give participants an opportunity to identify areas of strength and need in terms of their own English language proficiency, communication and instructional skills.

Teachers will also use a voice recording system as a tool for continual self-assessment and evaluation their oral language skills. These reflections of their taped oral language proficiency will be added to the teacher's Self-Directed Language Learning Journal.

3. **Weekly contributions to the Discussion Board and contributions other areas of the on-line Blackboard site** (at least two per week)

   The course is designed to give the participants greater knowledge, experience and understanding of the use of technology as a tool for teaching and learning. With this in mind, we have created an on-line component of the course. All of the course materials (with the exception of the texts) will be found on the site, as well as resources, copies of presentations, and a Discussion Board for each weekly theme. Teachers are required to submit a response, comment, question or observation to the Discussion Board each week. They are also required to make a comment to another student's post at least once a week. All teachers are required to check the course site for announcements, forms, or on-line readings on each topic regularly. The instructor will orientate the teachers on how to use the site at the beginning of the course.

4. **Biography of Learning** (submitted at the end of each semester).

   Throughout the first semester of the program, participants will use the Blackboard on-line course Discussion Board as a forum for questioning and reflecting upon their learning and to identify their own theories about what constitutes good learning and teaching in the Canadian context. This written record along with the Field Experience Portfolios, Self-Directed Language Learning Reflective Journals, as well as other class activities and presentations, will serve as a means for each teacher to identify what has been significant in their growth as a teacher throughout the course.

   At the end of the each semester, each student will present a retrospective narrative account where they clearly articulate significant aspects of their learning history in a "Biography of Learning". This work is an important opportunity for the teacher to connect experience and knowledge and to extend the power of both.

The format of this work may be a written paper of 8-10 pages that identifies the themes, which the teacher identifies as having significantly impacted the students' thinking, or it may be a visual or metaphorical representation. If the teacher chooses to make a symbolic or metaphorical representation of their ideas, they must also add a 3-4 page paper describing the meaning of the symbols they have chosen to represent their learning over the term.

The following questions should help the teacher be oriented to the idea of what constitutes a good biography of learning:

- Have you articulated your experience clearly?
- Does your work demonstrate a growing awareness of the possibilities and constraints in your own and others practice?
- Have your drawn from the readings/experiences from the cases, guest speakers, field experiences, on-line and class discussions to make connections with your development as an educator in Canada?
- Can you do reasonable self-assessments and formulate worthwhile goals in your professional self-improvement?

5. **Case Study Seminar Leader** (1 time)

Weekly themes will be presented initially through the study of cases that present real-life learning and teaching scenarios and issues to be analyzed, debated, and perhaps resolved. Casework offers a series of complex topics which may arise in a Canadian educational milieu. Examination of these may require participants to explore alternative perspectives from their previous paradigms of teaching from other countries.

Participants will be required each week to generate weekly written responses to the weekly themes, as well as participate in the discussions surrounding these cases. During these discussions, participants should draw upon their past experience, previous reading and ongoing reading of the literature, and their pedagogical intuition to guide them. Good seminars occur when the participants study the text closely, listen actively, share ideas and questions in response to the questions as ideas of others, and search for evidence to support their ideas. Through careful preparation, participants share the responsibility with the leader for the quality of the case discussions.

The role of the case leader is to prepare questions for the group, lead the participants through a thoughtful discussion of the main themes arising from the case text. At the end of the case discussion, the participants leading the seminar should summarize the discussion, paying close attention to the possibilities for action suggested. Case Seminar leaders will pose questions, call on participants and ensure that the discussion remains focused and productive.

6. **Field Seminar Leader** (1 time)

   At the end of each week, a seminar will be held to examine the careful systematic inquiry, what is occurring in the field, and from that to create a deeper understanding of learning, teaching, curriculum and life in schools. Two students will be assigned to lead the field discussions in a manner similar to the Case Study Seminars.

7. **Presentations to class on topics related to the themes** (completed in groups of 2-3 students or individually)

   Presentation #1 – School in my Country
   Presentation #2 – On a learning theorist
   Presentation #3 – On an assessment technique
   Presentation #4 – On an instructional Strategy or technique
   Presentation #5 – On an educational technology tool for teaching

   The program is focused around pedagogical themes. Each student will be required to complete weekly readings, prepare initial reactions to case studies, and participate in role-plays and discussions focused around the weekly topics.

   In addition to this, an individual or group of two or three participants will work together to make a short presentation on a topic they have researched related to the weekly theme. Presentations may incorporate multimedia, technology, other visuals such as graphs, illustrations or pictures, may be interactive or lecture style, or may be structured as a group discussion or role play. Although the participants will work together in teams for these presentations, they will be evaluated for their individual contributions to the whole. At the beginning of the course, participants will sign up for the topic and group members for their presentations.

Guidelines for Assessment:

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve teaching and learning practices. As such, assessment is based on three questions:

- Where is the work strong?
- How can the work be improved?
- What can you do next to strengthen your work and that of others?

Participants in the program must complete all of the course activities and assignments, as well as successfully complete the practicum component to receive a certificate of completion and/or credit for the course. Evaluation and feedback by the instructor will occur on an ongoing basis.

The forms of assessment and feedback to the participants from the instructor will be given in the following ways:

- Verbal feedback on daily classroom activities and videotaped teaching sequences and role-play scenarios;

- Written response to participants' written entries on the on-line Discussion Board threads;
- Written responses to the Self-Directed Language Learning Journal, the Biography of Learning and Field Experience Portfolios;
- A narrative written assessment of participants' teaching in field placements and the quality of work in the professional seminars.

The forms of self-assessment that the student will be required to submit:

- Assessment of their language proficiency needs and of progress towards the goals they identify in their Self-Directed Language Learning Journals;
- Assessment of their strengths and areas of need as professional teachers outlined in their Biography of Learning and Field Experience Portfolios.

Successful completion of the practicum by participating teachers is made by the Instructor in consultation with the partnering teachers. A written narrative assessment is also completed by partnering teachers in the participants' field placements.

Comments given by partner teachers can include, but are not limited to comments relating to the following areas:

- The development of professional relationships between the partner teacher, students, co-workers and school administration;
- Proficiency and use of the curriculum;
- The cultivation of an effective learning environment;
- The quality and preparation for teaching;
- The professional value of the materials used in practice teaching;
- The level of professionalism in the working environment;
- The ability to reflect critically on teaching-learning transactions;
- The progress towards professional aims;
- Proficiency in using English and sociolinguistic skills to effectively communicate to students, co-workers, parents, and school administrator.

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Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Schedule

[Sept. 2010 – Dec. 2010, Semester ONE]

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00 – 9:30		Warm-up	Field Experiences/ School Observations	Field Experiences/ School Observations	Warm-up, preparation for next week
10:00 – 12:00	Lecture at University	Case Seminar			Field Seminar
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch Break	Lunch Break			Lunch Break
12:30 – 1:00	Lecture review/ discussion	Topic activities: role plays, group tasks, Guest speakers			Student Presentations/Class Activities
1:00 – 3:00	Lecture review/ Discussion Class Activities				
		Reflective journal/ Closure and review			Reflective journal/ Closure and review

[Jan. 2011 – March 2011, Semester TWO]

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00 – 9:30	Warm-up, Introduction of weekly topics	Field Experiences	Field Experiences	Field Experiences	Warm-up
10:00 – 12:00	Class Activities				Field Seminar
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch Break				Lunch Break
12:30 – 3:00	Topic activities: role plays, group tasks Guest speakers				Student Presentations/Class Activities
	Reflective journal/ Closure and review				Reflective journal/ Closure and review

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Weekly Content Themes [Year at a Glance]

WEEK #1 **THEME:** Uncovering Our Beliefs about Teaching and Learning	**First week of Semester One.** Class Activities; School Observations, Student Presentations – School in my Country
WEEK #2 **THEME:** Inquiry Approaches to Education	Lecture at University; Case Study Seminar; Class Activities; Guest Speaker; School Observations
WEEK #3 **THEME:** Theories of Learning and Development	Lecture at University; Class Activities; Student Presentations of Learning Theorists; School Observations
WEEK #4 **THEME:** Culture and Education	Lecture at University; Case Study Seminar/Guest Speakers; Start of Practicum #1 (week 1); Field Seminar/Class Activities
WEEK #5 **THEME:** Emotional Intelligence	Practicum #1 (week 2); Field Seminar/Class Activities; Guest Speaker
WEEK #6 **THEME:** Inclusive Teaching Practices – ESL and Aboriginal Education	Lecture at University; Case Study Seminar/Guest Speakers; Practicum #1 (week 3); Field Seminar/Class Activities
WEEK #7 **THEME:** Inclusive Teaching Practices: Special Needs & Gifted	Lecture at University; Case Study Seminar/Guest Speakers; Practicum #1 (week 4); Field Seminar/Class Activities
WEEK #8 **THEME:** Assessment for Learning	Lecture at University; Case Study Seminar/Guest Speakers; Practicum #1 (week 5); Field Seminar; Student Presentations of classroom assessment techniques
WEEK #9 **THEME:** Instructional Design/ Lesson Planning	Case Study/Guest Speakers; Practicum #1 (week 6); Field Seminar/Class Activities
WEEK #10 **THEME:** Creating Collaborative Learning Environments/ Instructional Strategies	Lecture at University; Case Seminar; Practicum #1 (week 7); Field Seminar
WEEK #11, #12 and #13 – **Practicum Immersion Weeks**	

WEEK #14	**Last week of Semester One**; Field Experience Seminar/Self-Directed Language Learning Reflections Due; Presentations of Biographies of Learning & Field Experience Portfolios; Celebration of Learning
WEEK #15 **THEME:** Differentiating Instruction	**First week of Semester Two**; First Day of Practicum #2 (week 1); Field Seminar/Class Activities; Student Presentations of Instructional Strategies
WEEK #16 **THEME:** Understanding By Design – Unit Planning	Practicum #2 (week 2); Field Seminar/Class Activities
WEEK #17 **THEME:** Integrating Technology	Practicum #2 (week 3); Field Seminar; Student Presentations – technology in teaching
WEEK #18 **THEME:** Alberta Program of Studies	Alberta Programs of Study: Curricular Areas – guest Speakers; Practicum #2 (week 4)
WEEK #19 **THEME:** Alberta Program of Studies	Alberta Programs of Study: Curricular Areas – guest Speakers; Practicum #2 (week 5)
WEEK #20 **THEME:** Alberta Program of Studies	Alberta Programs of Study: Curricular Areas – guest Speakers; Practicum #2 (week 6); Calgary Teachers' Convention
WEEK #21, #22 and #23 **– Practicum #2 Immersion Weeks, TQS**	
WEEK #24	**Final week of course** –Mock Interviews/resume writing; Self-Directed Language Learning Reflections due; Presentations of Biography of Learning & Field Experience Portfolios; Student Evaluations given; End of class celebration

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Weeks at a Glance

WEEK #1

THEME: Uncovering Our Beliefs about Teaching and Learning

Monday:	Introductions, Go over course requirements, syllabus & schedule; Autobiography of our experiences as learners and teachers. Team-building activities.
Tuesday:	Group Task: How will we accomplish our work together? Establishing ground rules, expectations. Self-inventory of beliefs about teaching, describing how to write a personal philosophy of teaching – read article Beliefs–Lenses of Perception for Friday, Police clearance forms & Media release forms.
Wednesday:	School Observations – Choose one teacher and describe how the evidence you see shows her his/her philosophy of teaching and learning.
Thursday:	School Observations – Choose one teacher and describe how the evidence you see shows her his/her philosophy of teaching and learning.
Friday:	Sharing of observations from school visits; introduction to on-line site for the course; Student Presentations: *Who Do I Think I Am?*

Key questions:

- What do you hope to learn from this course? How will you accomplish this?
- Which factors/people/events most shaped you as a learner?
- Which factors/people/events most shaped you as a teacher?
- What is your story?
- Have your beliefs about teaching and learning changed over the years?
- What metaphors do you attribute to teaching and learning?
- How will we accomplish our work together?
- How do you describe respectful relationships?
- What does respect look like in practice?
- Who are we as a group?

Language Themes:

Conversational management, interpersonal language; expressing points of view; active listening, developing phrases in response to others to foster collaboration and cooperation when working in small groups and in seminar discussions; responding to questions; asking for clarification; presenting ideas individually in front of a group.

Cultural Themes:

Cross-cultural communication, non-verbal communication, exploring the cultural backgrounds of the teachers, exploring issues surrounding the influence of culture on education, exploring differences in educational systems around the world, exploring similarities in educational systems around the world.

Weekly Reading:

- *Teaching in Mind*: Chapter 2
- *Teaching in Mind*: Self-inventory
- Brookfield, S. (1995). *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher.* Chapter 2 – *Becoming Critically Reflective*
- Observation Checklist
- Reading the course syllabus

Weekly Writing:

- Complete Self-Inventory
- Begin a personal statement of teaching philosophy
- Begin Learning Journal

Speaking:

- Oral Presentation: *Who Do You Think You Are? What is your story?*

Resources:

Yero, J. (2002). *Teaching in Mind: How Teaching Thinking Shapes Education.* Hamilton: Mindflight Publishing. Chapters 2, 6, 20 & Inventory.

Brookfield, S. (1995). *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher.* Chapter 2 – *Becoming Critically Reflective.*

Calgary Board of Education's Superintendent's recorded speech.

Instructor's sample PPT Presentation – Who Do I Think I Am?

WEEK #2

THEME: Inquiry Approaches to Education

Monday: Lecture at University; Guest speaker; Inquiry and introduction to the Galileo Education Network – students examine data from "What Did You learn In School Today" report.

Tuesday: Case Seminar; Student small group activity – looking at Galileo Education Network and choosing an inquiry to present to the class.

Wednesday: School Observations – looking for evidence of student engagement.

Thursday: School Observations – looking for evidence of student engagement.

Friday: Field seminar about school observation; Logging in to the on-line course, Biography of Language Learning begins – review of peer feedback from last week's oral presentations, Review drafts of teaching philosophies, Watch Sir Ken Robinson video.

Key questions:

- What are some of the philosophical beliefs about learning which lay the foundation of inquiry-based approaches to teaching?
- How does our understanding of differences in individual learning styles inform our approaches to teaching?
- How does an individual interact with the environment and gain experience?
- How would you describe a learner-centred environment? What does it look like? What does it sound like?
- What is student engagement?
- Why is student engagement important?

Language Themes:

Developing vocabulary and phrases specific to educational contexts of teaching and learning; summarizing written information; seeking clarification, acknowledging, evaluating and commenting on colleagues responses; attending to and comprehending educational topics from a spoken lecture; responding to questions; developing oral arguments and defending ideas with evidence.

Cultural Themes:

Understanding the cultural nuances of the educational system in Canada – both in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 system and in the post-secondary context; exploring issues of classroom environment and pedagogical relationships, exploring the nature of learning and the focus on inquiry-based approaches and critical thinking skills promoted in some Canadian classrooms.

Weekly Reading:

- *Understanding By Design:* Chapters 1-4
- *Voices Inside Schools* (article)
- *Becoming an Inquiry Teacher* (article)
- *Focus on Inquiry:* Chapters 1 & 2
- *What Did you Do In School Today?* A report from the Canadian Education Association

Weekly Writing:

- Learning journals entries– school observations – evidence of student engagement
- Begin Self-Directed Language Learning journals – feedback from last week's presentations
- Writing a letter of introduction to the partner teachers and practicum schools
- Weekly Blackboard postings

Speaking:

- Groupwork – presenting a curriculum unit from the Galileo Network to the class
- Seminars – Case study – Inquiry and School Observations

Resources:

(Student Text) Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design*.

Sir Ken Robinson video: www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.html.

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Website: Galileo Education Network: www.galileo.org.

Clifford, P. & Marinucci, S. (2008). *Voices Inside Schools*. Harvard Education Review. 78 (4), 675-688.

Focus on Inquiry (2004). Alberta Learning Report. Chapters 1 & 2.

What Did You Do In School Today? Report from Canadian Education Association.

WEEK #3

THEME: Theories of Learning and Development

Monday: Lecture at University; Seminar: Student small group task – reviewing major learning theories and learning theorists: Behaviorism; Cognitivism; Constructivism; Humanism – who were the major theorists? What did they believe to be true about teaching and learning?

Tuesday: Case Seminar ; Learning Styles/Multiple Intelligences Activities; Guest Speaker – Active Learning; Role Play – discussing concerns with a parent.

Wednesday: School Observations – looking for evidence of learning theories in action.

Thursday: School Observations– looking for evidence of learning theories in action.

Friday: Field Seminar – school observations; Oral Presentations (small group or pairs) – On a learning theorist. Possible theorists: Gardiner – Multiple Intelligences; Maslow – Humanism – Hierarchy of Needs; Carl Rogers – Experimental Learning; Bruner – Discovery Learning; Erik Erikson – Developmentalism; Mezirow – Transformational Learning Theory; Freire: Critical Pedagogy; Experiential Learning – Kolb; Situated Learning – Lave; Lateral Thinking – E. DeBono.

Key questions:

- Are images of growth and development the same across cultures?
- How do theorists represent their understanding of growth and development?
- How do schools represent their understanding of growth and development?
- What do you need to know about the developmental attributes of the students you teach? Why is it important to know this?
- What abilities do schools value and promote? How do they identify those abilities?
- What does recent research tell us about how the brain processes information? How should that information inform our teaching?
- How have theories of learning historically been implemented into the structure and organization of schools?
- How does one 'see' classrooms if they believe in a particular theory of learning?
- What theory or theories about learning have you identified as relevant for you to build your practice on?

Language Themes:

Developing phrases specific to child development, theories of learning and brain-based research; Developing vocabulary and phrases specific to theories of learning and gender-based research in education; understanding and demonstraing the appropriate discourse format for conversing with parents; understanding and demonstrating appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication strategies in professional conversations; building trust and developing relationships with students, colleagues and parents through appropriate use of language.

Cultural Themes:

Exploring Western views of student learning and development; connecting constructivist approaches to learning and the creation of learning environments in Alberta; examining the expectations of parents and students in Alberta schools in regards to the organization of schools, program design and delivery of curriculum; exploring the idea of multiple intelligences, learning styles and brain-based theories of learning; Cross-cultural and non-verbal communication in Canada; exploring Western theories of learning and their impact on the historical structure and organization in Canadian schools.

Weekly Reading:

- Case – Patterns of Growth and Development
- *Psychology Applied to Teaching: Cognitive Development and Language:* Chapter 2
- Learning Styles/Multiple Intelligences Handouts
- *Piaget and Education* (article)
- *How People Learn:* Chapter 4

Weekly Writing:

- Learning Journal Reflections – from Case Seminar & Guest Speaker Presentations and School Observations
- Chapter 2 – Identifying Important Terms and Vocabulary
- Weekly Blackboard Postings

Speaking:

- Discussing concerns with a parent (role play)
- Small group or pairs – oral presentations on a learning theorist (self-evaluation and peer feedback)

Resources:

Woolfolk, A., Winne, P. & Perry, N. (2005). *Educational Psychology, 3rd Canadian Edition*. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada. Chapter 2: *Cognitive Development and Language.*

Jardine, D (2005). *Piaget and Education: A primer.* New York: Peter Lang Publishing – Chapter 4: *Off-stage Vignettes*.

Student research on a learning Theorist.

Multiple intelligences: www.infed.org/thinkers/gardner.htm.

(Student Text) *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School, Expanded Edition*. (2000). Washington D.C.: National Academy of Press. Chapter 4.

Success for Al Learners: A Handbook for Differentiating Instruction. (1996). Manitoba Education and Training. Chapters 1 & 2.

WEEK #4

THEME: Culture & Education

Monday:	Lecture at University; Seminar – Looking at models of culture – Hofstede & Trompenaar powerpoint; iceberg mode; definitions of culture.
Tuesday:	Case Seminar – Diverse Classrooms; Guest Speakers from schools – Diversity Services.
Wednesday:	Practicum – Week 1 – looking for evidence of culture in schools.
Thursday:	Practicum – looking for evidence of diversity in schools.
Friday:	Field Seminar – How did your first week go? Discussions and presentations of artifacts: How do you define 'Canadian' culture?

Key questions:

- What is culture?
- Where do language and culture intersect?
- Can you understand a person's culture without understanding his/her language?
- How can we know the historical/social/ideological characteristics of our students? How does this information inform teaching?
- How would you describe the values of Canadian students? Teachers?
- What does a culturally diverse grouping offer to learners? What does it offer to teachers?

Language Themes:

Conversational management; interpersonal language; developing vocabulary and phrases specific to cultural orientations, identity and multiculturalism; seeking clarification and acknowledging; evaluating, analysing and synthesizing ideas surrounding one's own culture and that of the dominant group in Canada; expressing ideas in a coherent manner; developing arguments and supporting these in writing and orally; developing questioning skills for teaching.

Cultural Themes:

Exploring the concepts of "Canadian Culture", multiculturalism, and identity in relation to educational environments; exploring the cultural backgrounds of teachers, exploring elements of racism and cultural stereotyping; exploring issues of culture on identity, family and socio-economic status; exploring the concept of 'integration' and 'assimilation' of immigrants in Canada.

Weekly Reading:

- Case # 3 – Understanding the Difference Diversity Makes
- *Success for All Learners:* Chapters 1 & 2
- *Canadian Culture – A Category?* (article)

Weekly Writing:

- Reflective Questions about Culture in Learning Journal
- Observations of Canadian Culture in Practicum Schools
- Self-directed Language — Learning Journal — Self-Evaluation & Analysis of Language Use on DVD's of Presentations
- Vocabulary Terms in Self-Directed Language Learning Journal
- Culture and Communication reflection in Self-Directed Language Learning Journal.
- Weekly Blackboard Postings

Speaking:

- Presenting an artifact to the class of what they feel represents "Canadian Culture"
- Practicum and Case seminars

Resources:

(Student Text) Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc – Chapters 3 & 4.

Website: www.geert-hofstede.com.

Article – *Canadian Culture – a category?* www.theglobeandmail.com/archives/article801204.ece.

Videos: *I Am Canadian & Canadian, please.* www.canadianaconnection.com/blog/category/i-am-canadian.

(Student Text) *Success for All learners: A Handbook for Differentiating Instruction.* (1996). Manitoba Education and Training. Chapters 1 & 2.

WEEK #5
THEME: Emotional Intelligence/Soft Skills

Monday: Lecture at University; Seminar – Watch and discuss Lional LaRoche's video on soft skills and culture, email etiquette module.

Tuesday: Case Seminar – Diverse Classrooms; Guest Speaker – Emotional Intelligence overview.

Wednesday: Practicum – Week 2 – Communication with your partner teacher; the structure and organization of Canadian schools.

Thursday: Practicum.

Friday: Field Seminar – Discussion of the roles and responsibilities of staff in Canadian schools. Conflict resolution module; personal goal setting for developing soft skills; role play – conflict in the workplace: dealing with a difficult colleague and/or parent.

Key questions:

- How can we describe emotional literacy? Why should we?
- Why are soft skills important?
- What is the influence on culture of soft skills?
- What is a conflict?
- Why do conflicts occur in the workplace?
- How do emotions impact schooling or academic achievement?
- How are the emotions communicated?
- How is the reception of information influenced by the emotions?

Language Themes:

Giving instructions; modifying or reformatting questions during instruction; organizing language so that instruction is coherent and accessible to students; developing strategies and phrases for managing students in cooperative groups; developing strategies and phrases for establishing classroom rules and routines with students; developing strategies and phrases for speaking to parents about student conflicts; providing accurate and detailed descriptions, explanations and account of events; understanding the appropriate discourse patterns for speaking to parents about student behavior; distinguishing between passive, aggressive and assertive responses.

Cultural Themes:

Student expectations in Alberta classrooms; parent expectations in Alberta classrooms; current trends in Canadian education systems and the connection of these trends to classroom management in Canadian schools; soft skills in the Canadian workplace; conflict resolution; exploring the roles and responsibilities of staff in Canadian schools; email etiquette; exploring the concept of emotional intelligence; developing self-awareness of one's own emotional intelligence and identifying areas of strength and growth.

Weekly Reading:

- Case – Canadian soft skills What are they? How can they be developed? Why are they important?
- *Understanding by Design:* Chapters 5 & 6
- *Getting to the heart of Emotional Intelligence* (article)
- *Schooling the Emotions* (article)
- *Success for All Learners:* Chapter 3

Weekly Writing:

- Reflective Questions about Conflict Management in Learning Journals
- Observations of Roles and Responsibilities of staff in practicum schools
- Self-directed Language – Learning Journal – How well do I Communicate? How do I know?
- Weekly Blackboard Postings

Speaking:

- Practicum and Case seminars
- Role play scenario – dealing with a conflict in the workplace (difficult colleague and/or parent)

Resources:

(Student Text) Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design.* New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc – Chapters 5 & 6.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Schooling the Emotions in Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ.* NY:Bantham.

Getting to the Heart of Emotional Intelligence. University of Calgary, Research News (2009).

Video: Dr. Lionel LaRoche: www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLFH1djUlog.

Emotional Intelligence: http://danielgoleman.info/topics/emotional-intelligence.

Success for All learners: A Handbook for Differentiating Instruction. (1996). Manitoba Education and Training. Chapter 3.

WEEK #6

THEME: Inclusive Teaching Practices: ESL and Aboriginal Education

Monday: Lecture at University; Seminar – Myths/realities about language learning, BICS/CALP podcast; Aboriginal perspectives: www.fourdirectionsteachings.com/audio.html.

Tuesday: Case – Learning to Learn in A Second Language; Aboriginal Cultures from Alberta; Guest Speakers from Schools – ESL Specialist; Aboriginal Education Specialist.

Wednesday: Practicum – Week 3 – Looking for evidence – English Language Learners and their Educational Needs – How Are They Addressed?

Thursday: Practicum – Looking for evidence – How are Aboriginal Perspectives Addressed?

Friday: Field Seminar – Discussion about English language learners and Aboriginal students in school – ESL Strategies. Discussion – How are Aboriginal perspectives addressed in the classroom/curriculum?

Key questions:

- What do you think it means to be an ESL/Aboriginal student ?
- How might inequalities of language status affect learning?
- How are ESL/Aboriginal students identified in Alberta schools? What does this identification mean?
- What does integrated language learning assume?
- What can be done to empower ESL/Aboriginal students in schools?
- What does a classroom that respects diversity look like?
- What does it mean to integrate content and language learning? How can I do this?

Language Themes:

Developing strategies and phrases to discuss and describe the needs of diverse learners to colleagues and parents; developing vocabulary specific to inclusive teaching practices for ESL students; identifying needs and providing solutions with required details; responding to questions through asking for clarification; giving instructions; modifying or reformatting questions for clarity.

Cultural Themes:

Exploring the terms "inclusive education" and multiculturalism; exploring the Aboriginal cultures in Alberta and the learning needs of Aboriginal students in Alberta schools; exploring the integration of language and content through different subject areas; exploring the factors which impact learning in ESL students, understanding the varying needs of ESL students and parents throughout their educational lives; understanding the various support systems in place in school for teachers in regards to meeting the learning needs of Aboriginal and ESL learners.

Weekly Reading:

- *What Teachers Need to Know About Language* (article)
- *Learning to Learn in a 2nd Language* (article) Gibbons
- *The Acquisition of English as a 2nd language* — Coehlo

Weekly Writing:

- Vocabulary/Terms for weeks 1-6
- 2nd Language Learning reflections — past experiences and progress towards Self-directed language learning goals
- Weekly postings on the Blackboard site

Speaking:

- Discussions in seminars

Resources:

PowerPoint: Genesee: Myths and Realities of Second Language Learning www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/events/enhancing-practice-with-e/genesee.pdf.

Gibbons, P. (2002) Scaffolding Language Scaffolding Learning. Portsmouth:Heinneman.

Wong Fillmore, L. (2000). *What Teachers Need to Know About Language*. ERIC Clearinghouse of Languages and Linguistics – Special report.

Coehlo, E. (2004). *Adding English: A Guide to Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms.* Toronto: Pippin Publishing Corp.

Podcast on BICS/CALP Cummins: media.pearsoncmg.com/intl/elt/cornerstone/podcasts/jimcummins_nyc_jan09.mp3.

Aboriginal perspectives: www.fourdirectionsteachings.com/audio.html.

WEEK #7

THEME: Inclusive Teaching Practices: Special Needs & Gifted Students

Monday: Lecture at University; Seminar – Alberta Education Standards for Special Education – on-line workshop materials, Coding, Accommodations & Modifications.

Tuesday: Case Seminar; Guest Speakers – Special Needs and Gifted Education Specialists from schools.

Wednesday: Practicum – Week 4 – looking for evidence – How do you personalize learning for students with special learning needs?

Thursday: Practicum.

Friday: Field Seminar, Writing goals and progress on Individual Program Plans, Role Play: Speaking to a parent about student IPPs.

Key questions:

- What are your personal beliefs about students with exceptionalities in your classroom?
- How do categories or labels for students come about?
- How does a teacher acknowledge diverse abilities amongst students without labeling them?
- What does coding/not coding mean in an inclusive classroom?
- What questions and implications might you need to consider as you begin to draft an Individualized Program Plan (IPP)?
- What is important to know about the intellectual, emotional and social needs of gifted students?

Language Themes:

Developing strategies and phrases to discuss and describe the needs of diverse learners to colleagues and parents; developing vocabulary specific to inclusive teaching practices for students with disabilities and learning needs; identifying needs and providing solutions with required details; responding to questions through asking for clarification; giving instructions; modifying or reformatting questions for clarity, developing appropriate phrases for use on IPP's; using language effectively to collaborate with specialists to obtain resources and information for working with diverse learners; understanding the appropriate discourse format for conversing with parents and students about student learning needs and assessments.

Cultural Themes:

The history of inclusive education in Alberta; demographics and differing needs of diverse learners in Alberta; expectations for teachers in regards to creating inclusive classrooms in Canada; legal issues surrounding the completion of IPP's and evaluations for students with learning needs for teachers in Alberta; planning appropriate accommodations and extension tasks through differentiating curricula for diverse students.

Weekly Reading:

- Case – Learning to Respond
- *Meeting the Needs of the Gifted* (article)
- *Making A Difference*: Chapters 8 & 10
- Universal Design for Learning (CAST) website

Weekly Writing:

- Filling out an IPP, writing goals using performance objectives
- Making accommodations in a lesson plan for diverse needs
- Weekly posting on Blackboard

Speaking:

- Role play – speaking to a parent about a student with special learning needs
- Case & Practicum seminars

Resources:

Lafferty, S. (date unknown). Meeting the Needs of the Academically Gifted: www.ksde.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=HrJmjoJaXy8%3D&tabid=4278.

Special Education Coding Criteria (2008/2009). Alberta Education.

Student Assistances Referral Process (Rocky View School Division #41).

Calgary Board of Education *Student Services Individual Program Plan Guide*.

Alberta Education: *Programming for Students with Special Needs*. http://education.alberta.ca/admin/special/resources.aspx.

Alberta Education (2010): *Making a Difference: Meeting diverse learning needs with differentiated instruction.*

CAST website: www.cast.org/udl/index.html.

WEEK 8
THEME: Assessment for Learning

Monday: Lecture at University; Seminar: Assessment — Anne Davies video; Preparing for a new year – making an assessment plan: Alberta Assessment Consortium website & materials: www.aac.ab.ca/AboutUs.html; Looking at Provincial exams (PATS).

Tuesday: Case Seminar; Guest speaker from school on Assessment.

Wednesday: Practicum – Week 5 – looking for evidence of effective feedback.

Thursday: Practicum.

Friday: Field Seminar; evaluating performance tasks, writing performance tasks, 5 minute oral presentation – students share an assessment strategy.

Key questions:

- How do you determine what counts as learning in your classroom?
- What are the differences between assessment and evaluation?
- What principles assist teachers in planning for student assessment and evaluation?
- What does assessment for learning look like in a school?
- What is triangulation and how can it help teachers make more reliable assessments of their students' achievements?
- What constitutes effective feedback?
- What strategies can teachers use to make sure students get enough feedback on their learning?

Language Themes:

Using effective vocabulary to state measurable teaching and learning objectives; developing vocabulary specific to formative and summative assessment practices in teaching; developing strategies and phrases to articulate assessment plans and the meaning of classroom assessment to students, parents and administrators in schools; identifying needs and providing solutions with required details; understanding the appropriate discourse format for conversing with parents and students about student learning needs and results of classroom evaluation tools.

Cultural Themes:

Understanding the history and components of provincial examinations in Alberta; Parent and community expectations of the value and meaning of formal assessments in Alberta (Provincial exams); the role of the teacher in Canadian schools to disseminate and distribute the results of classroom evaluation; the teachers' role in using assessment tools to drive instructional planning and practices in Alberta.

Weekly Reading:

- Case – Assessing Learners and Learning: Who gets to say what counts?
- *Making Classroom Assessment Work*: Chapters 4, 5, & 7 (jigsaw) – (Davies)
- *Understanding By Design*: Chapters 7 & 8

Weekly Writing:

- Questions for Case Seminar on Case reading
- Weekly Blackboard postings
- Writing performance tasks
- Assessment vocabulary for self-directed language learning journal

Speaking:

- In case and practicum seminars
- Five minute oral presentation on an assessment strategy

Resources:

Davies, A., Herbst, S. & Parrot Reynolds, B. (2008). *Leading the Way to Making Classroom Assessment Work*. Courtney, BC: Connections Publishing.

Davies, A. *Making Classroom Assessment Work*. ASCD Chapters 4, 5, and 7.

Understanding By Design (student text). Chapters 7 & 8.

Alberta Assessment Consortium Workshop Materials: www.aac.ab.ca.

WEEK 9

THEME: Instructional Design/Lesson Planning

Monday: Lecture; Seminar – *Understanding By Design Professional Development Workbook* Class Exploration – Essential Questions and Enduring Understandings; analysing teaching videos of lessons.

Tuesday: Case seminar – The Instructional Core; Guest presenter – instructional design – the process of UBD unit planning.

Wednesday: Practicum – Week 6 – looking for evidence of planning.

Thursday: Practicum.

Friday: Field Seminar; analysing our UBD unit plans and lesson plans and sharing these with the group; unit plan writing workshop.

Key questions:

- What is instructional design and why is it important?
- What factors need to be considered when planning for instruction?
- What does good planning look like?
- How can you know if your instructional design has validity?
- What are essential questions and enduring understandings? Why are they important to instructional design?
- What is the rationale for designing integrated curriculum?
- How can students demonstrate understanding of curricular objectives?

Language Themes:

Giving instructions, modifying or reformatting questions for instructional purposes, organizing spoken language to foster coherence and accessibility of instruction for students, developing specific vocabulary for addressing the elements of instructional design and unit planning, using negotiation and other strategies to keep discussions about curriculum on track with colleagues and peers; organizing, stating, supporting, sequencing, classifying, explaining and exchanging information with colleagues on curricular topics.

Cultural Themes:

Further exploration of the role of the student and teacher in the Canadian educational setting, current trends in the Canadian educational system connected to the practice of instructional design, the Alberta Programs of Study, and in the design and implementation of effective units of study for students.

Weekly Reading:

- *Understanding By Design:* Chapters 4, 9, 10, 11
- *Improving the Instructional Core* (article)
- *How People Learn*: Chapter 1 & 6

Weekly Writing:

- Self-evaluation of last week's oral presentation
- Writing a lesson and unit plan using the Understanding By Design framework
- Weekly postings on Blackboard
- Self-Directed Language Learning Journal — How am you doing towards meeting your goals?

Speaking:

- Seminar and discussions
- Crafting essential questions and enduring understandings

Resources:

How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School, Expanded Edition. (2000). Washington D.C.: National Academy of Press. Chapters 1 & 6.

Elmore, R (2008). *Improving the Instructional Core*. http://pview.tcaps.net/boardpacket/Board%20Retreat%20Packet%2004-10-10/G%20-%20Improving%20the%20Instructional%20Core%20-%20Elmore.pdf.

Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design.* New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc. Chapters 4, 8, 10, 11.

Wiggins, G & McTigue, J. (2004). *Understanding By Design, Professional Development Workbook.*

WEEK 10

THEME: Creating Collaborative Learning Environments/Instructional Strategies

Monday: Lecture at university; Seminar — observations of teaching videos to look for effective ways of creating an effective learning environment for students; discussions of effective strategies found in practicum classes.

Tuesday: Case Seminar; role play – speaking to a student with behavioral challenges; Guest speaker from school – Effective Classroom Management.

Wednesday: Practicum – Week 7 – looking for evidence — What makes an effective learning environment?

Thursday: Practicum.

Friday: Field Seminar; Five minute individual demonstration of an instructional tactic or strategy.

Key questions:

- How are classrooms organized to reflect beliefs about teaching and learning?
- How do pedagogical relationships affect learning?
- How do you build a collaborative learning environment?
- How does an individual interact with the environment and gain experience?
- Why is it important to link classroom learning to other aspects of students' lives?
- What are some of the ways teachers link classroom learning to student experiences outside of the classroom?
- How do instructional strategies inform teaching?

Language Themes:

Developing vocabulary and phrases specific to the creation of learning environments in schools, qualifying opinions, adding information and elaborating, presenting main ideas of written material, communicating feelings, attitudes, doubts and concerns both orally and in writing, developing questioning techniques which foster critical thinking in students, understanding the appropriate discourse for conversing with parents about pedagogical decisions based on current theories of emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and best practices in teaching.

Cultural Themes:

Examining the expectations of parents and students in Alberta schools in regards to pedagogical relationships, learning environments, and connecting classroom learning to home experiences; exploring elements of effective communication between parents, teachers and students in Canada.

Weekly Reading:

- *Success for All Learners:* Chapters 3, 5, & 6
- *Discipline with Dignity* (article)
- *Beyond Monet* (scan through the book and read what is of interest to you

Weekly Writing:

- Written response from Case
- Reflections from field/case/guest speaker/reading for Learning Journal
- Creating a newsletter for their five-minute presentation on an instructional strategy – copy one per class member – use Microsoft publisher

Speaking:

- Five-minute demonstration of an instructional strategy or tactic that you find interesting/effective from *Beyond Monet* or *Success for All Learners*
- In case and field seminars

Resources:

Success for All Learners: A Handbook for Differentiating Instruction. (1996). Manitoba Education and Training. Chapters 3, 5, & 6.

Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design.* New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

Curwin, R. (1997) *Discipline with Dignity*. Education Digest 63 (4) 11-14.

WEEK 11, 12, 13
Practicum Immersion Weeks

WEEK 14
End of Seminar One

- Presentation of Practicum Portfolios
  - Unit plan, learning journals, lesson plans, lesson evaluations, feedback from partner teacher, other artifacts
- Presentation of Biographies of Learning
- Final reflections in Self-Directed Language Learning Journal
- Proposal for Inquiry Project Due
- Celebration of Learning

FIRST WEEK OF SEMINAR TWO

WEEK 15

THEME: Differentiating Instruction

Monday: Watch video clips of Differentiated Instruction – Carol Anne Tomlinson; Differentiation – What it is and isn't – class activity; Summary of Instructional Tactics — www.bcatml.org/POT/beyondmonet.pdf Guest speaker from school – effective differentiation.

Tuesday: Practicum 2 – Week 1 – looking for evidence of differentiation.

Wednesday: Practicum.

Thursday: Practicum.

Friday: Field Seminar; Gallery Walk; Cooperative Learning, Think-Pair-Share, The five essential elements of Cooperative learning, Writing report card comments.

Key questions:

- What is your experience of multilevel classes? What strategies have you found to be successful?
- What are some of the rationales for using differentiated instruction?
- What constitutes differentiated instruction?
- What does a differentiated classroom look like?
- What are some of the arguments that support group work in education?
- How can you ensure all students are participating equally and effectively in cooperative groups?

Language Themes:

Developing strategies and phrases to discuss and describe the needs of diverse learners to colleagues and parents; modifying or reformatting questions during instruction; organizing spoken language so that instruction is coherent and accessible to students; developing vocabulary specific to differentiated teaching; developing strategies and phrases for managing students in cooperative groups in classrooms.

Cultural Themes:

Exploring the history of education in Canada and the rationale for creating lessons that differ according to students' abilities, interests or learning styles; becoming aware of current research and prominent researchers in the area of differentiated instruction in North America; understanding expectations of the components in lesson/unit planning; exploring rationale for creating cooperative learning groups and how to effectively manage student groupings in classrooms; exploring the teacher's role and responsibilities in a differentiated classroom; comparing a differentiated lesson with that of a traditional lesson.

Weekly Reading:

- NCAC Differentiation (article)
- REACH Framework (article)
- Considering Evidence of Learning in Diverse Classrooms – *Integrating Differentiated Instruction in Understanding By Design* – Chapter 5

Weekly Writing:

- Written response from Case
- Reflections from field/case/guest speaker/reading for Learning Journal
- Writing Report card comments
- Concept map for differentiation

Speaking:

- Case and Field Seminars

Resources:

Tomlinson, C.A. & Imbeau, M. (2010). *Leading and Managing in a Differentiated Classroom*. Alexandria, VA.: ASCD.

Tomlinson, C.A. (2003). *Fulfilling the Promise of the Differentiated Classroom*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Tomlinson, C.A. (2001). *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms – 2nd Edition*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Tomlinson, C.A. & McTughe, J. (2006). *Integrating Differentiated Instruction and Understanding By Design*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. Chapter 5.

Bennett, B. & Rolheiser, C. (2001). *Beyond Monet: The Artful Science of Instructional Integration*. Toronto: Bookation Inc.

REACH Framework http://rtitlc.ucf.edu/Tools/documents/Diff/REACH_A_Framework_for_Differentiating_Classroom_Instruction.pdf.

CAST Differentiation: www.cast.org/system/galleries/download/ncac/DifInstruc.pdf.

Beyond Monet masters: www.bcatml.org/POT/beyondmonet.pdf.

WEEK 16

THEME: Understanding By Design – Unit Planning

Monday: *Beyond Monet* – p. 55-81 workshop on using *Understanding By Design* to plan curriculum units, Understanding By Design Professional Development Workbook; analysing our planning and questioning skills; teaching for understanding.

Tuesday: Practicum 2 – Week 2 – Looking for evidence of teaching for understanding.

Wednesday: Practicum.

Thursday: Practicum.

Friday: Field Seminar; Inquiry Projects Presentations and written paper due; review the vocabulary from glossary of *Understanding By Design*.

Key questions:

- What does it mean to teach for understanding?
- Why are questioning techniques important?
- What makes a question 'essential'?
- How do the Six Facets of understanding inform your planning?
- How do you know if you are effective in your oral communication in teaching?
- What important learning occurred for you from your inquiry project?

Language Themes:

Giving instructions, modifying or reformatting questions for instructional purposes, organizing spoken language so foster coherence and accessibility of instruction for students, developing specific vocabulary for addressing the elements of instructional design and unit planning, using negotiation and other strategies to keep discussions about curriculum on track with colleagues and peers; organizing, stating, supporting, sequencing, classifying, explaining and exchanging information with colleagues on curricular topics; understanding the vocabulary associated with Bloom's Taxonomy of thinking – knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation, evaluating and applying these terms through questioning techniques in pedagogical situations.

Cultural Themes:

Further exploration of the role of the student and teacher in the Canadian educational setting, current trends in the Canadian educational system connected to the practice of instructional design, the Alberta Programs of Study, and in the design and implementation of effective units of study for students.

Weekly Reading:

- Recommended reading for the rest of the course — *Understanding By Design*: Chapters 7, 9, 10 & 11 of
- *Beyond Monet* p. 55-81
- Review vocabulary In the UBD glossary

Weekly Writing:

- Inquiry Paper due
- Self-reflection of teaching videos and progress towards language learning goals in Self-Directed Language Learning Journal
- Reflections of practicum teaching in Learning Journal

Speaking:

- Oral presentations of Inquiry Projects
- Discussions, field and case seminars

Resources:

Bennett, B. & Rolheiser, C. (2001). *Beyond Monet: The Artful Science of Instructional Integration*. Toronto: Bookation Inc.

Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

McTighe, J. & Wiggins, G. (2004). *Understanding by Design Professional Development Workbook*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

WEEK 17

THEME: Integrating Technology

Monday: *Understanding Digital Children* – discussion of the article and implications for teaching; video – 21st century learners.

Tuesday: Practicum 2 – Week 3 – looking for evidence of technology in teaching.

Wednesday: Practicum.

Thursday: Practicum.

Friday: Field seminar; Guest speaker on Smart technology; five-minute presentation on a program or technology for teaching – possible topics: tablets, podcasts, wiki, email, delicious, blogs, youtube, digital storytelling, webcasts, video-conferencing, smartboards, interactive websites, etc.

Key questions:

- What does 'integrating technology in teaching' mean to you?
- How do technology tools and resources influence learning and teaching and the design of instruction?
- How do you describe learning in the 21st century?
- How do you know if using a technology tool has enhanced your instruction?
- What do you need to know about technology to use it effectively in your teaching?
- When is using technology ineffective?
- How are 21st century learners different? How are they the same?

Language Themes:

Giving instructions, modifying or reformatting questions for instructional purposes, organizing spoken language so foster coherence and accessibility of instruction for students, developing specific vocabulary for addressing the elements of technology for teaching, using negotiation and other strategies to keep discussions about curriculum on track with colleagues and peers; organizing, stating, supporting, sequencing, classifying, explaining and exchanging information with colleagues on curricular topics.

Cultural Themes:

Further exploration of the role of the student and teacher in the Canadian educational setting, current trends in the Canadian educational system connected to the practice of instructional design, the Alberta Programs of Study, and in the design and implementation of effective units of study for students. Expectations for teachers in regards to using technology for teaching in Alberta schools.

Weekly Reading:

- *Understanding Digital Children* (article)
- *Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants* (article)
- *Authentic Learning for the 21st century: An overview* (article)

Weekly Writing:

- Working on inquiry Projects
- Writing reflections in Learning Journals

Speaking:

- Five minute oral presentation on a technology tool for teaching
- Seminars and discussions

Resources:

Lombardi, M. *Authentic Learning for the 21st Century: An Overview*. ELI Paper 1:2007. EDUCAUSE.

Jukes, I. & Dosaj, A. (2006). *Understanding Digital Children (DKs) Teaching and Learning in the New Digital Landscape*. Paper prepared for the Singapore MOE Mass Lecture: InfoSavvy Group.

Prensky, M (2001). *Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants*. From On the Horizon, NCB University Press, 9 (5) 1-9.

SMART tools website: www.smarttech.com.

WEEK 18, 19 & 20

THEME: Alberta Programs of Study: Curricular Areas

Monday: Presentations from curriculum specialists on subject area specializations and curricular outcomes mandated by the Alberta POS – Math, LA, Social Studies, Health & Physical Education, Career and Technology Studies (CTS), Science, Fine and Performing Arts; French & International Languages.

Tuesday: Practicum 2 – Weeks 4, 5, 6.

Wednesday: Practicum.

Thursday: Teachers Convention, Curriculum Specialists.

Friday: Teachers Convention, Curriculum Specialists.

Key questions:

- What does the Alberta Program of Studies (POS) for the curricular areas look like and sound like in practice?
- What do you need to know about the Alberta Programs of Study?
- How are learning outcomes turned into engaging tasks for students?
- How can you approach the curriculum in an effective way?
- Where can you find support for your planning and teaching?
- Why is there an Alberta Programs of Study?
- Why do teachers attend a teachers conference?

Language Themes:

Organizing, stating, supporting, sequencing, classifying, explaining and exchanging information with colleagues on curricular topics; vocabulary associated with curricular areas of the Alberta Programs of Study; Asking questions and seeking appropriate information in written texts.

Cultural Themes:

Current trends in the Canadian educational system connected to the Alberta Programs of Study, and in the design and implementation of effective units of study for students; networking with peers and integrating into the community of practicing teachers through participation in teachers convention; understanding the resources and curricular supports available for teachers in Alberta; understanding the structure and organization of the Alberta Programs of Study curricular areas.

WEEK 21, 22, 23

Practicum 2 Immersion Weeks

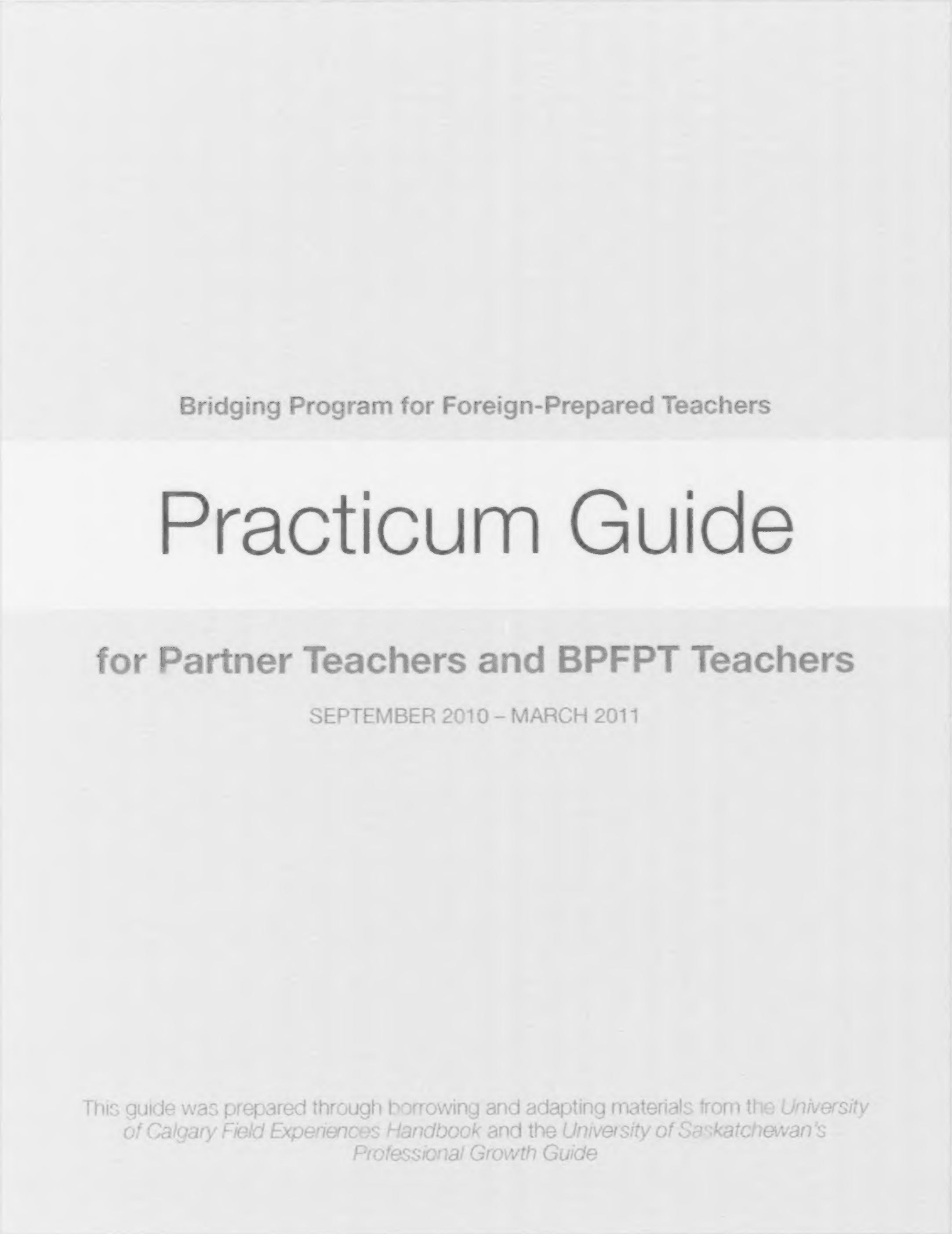
WEEK 24

Final week of course

- Mock interviews (2 per teacher)
- Resumes updated and produced
- Professional Portfolios Assembled
- Practicum 2 Portfolio Due
- Biography of Learning Presentations
- Final evaluations of teachers
- Course evaluation completed by the teachers
- Final Celebration of Learning

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Practicum Guide



Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Practicum Guide

for Partner Teachers and BPFPT Teachers

SEPTEMBER 2010 – MARCH 2011

This guide was prepared through borrowing and adapting materials from the *University of Calgary Field Experiences Handbook* and the *University of Saskatchewan's Professional Growth Guide*

Welcome!

The pilot Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers is a 24-week, two-semester program designed to assist immigrant teachers overcome challenges they face in obtaining employment as teachers in Canada. Each week of our program is designed around a theoretical educational concept and related case scenario. Through this program, we provide experiences that allow our foreign-prepared teachers to learn about Canadian pedagogical practices and to master the professional language needed in various situations commonly encountered by teachers in Canadian schools. The integrated practicum experience is an essential component to reaching these goals.

The purpose of this guide is to familiarize both Partner Teachers and participants with the roles and responsibilities associated with practicum and to serve as a means for effective communication between both parties. At the end of each semester, the participants submit a Practicum Portfolio that will include artifacts and reflections from their teaching experiences in practicums. The completed *Teaching Quality Standard* Table (at the end of this Guide) must be submitted in their portfolio. We strongly suggest that partner teachers and participants complete the *Teaching Quality Standard* Table together, each with their own copy. This table can therefore, serve as a record to partner teachers practice and will assist in the writing of the end of semester narrative evaluation.

The Role of Foreign-Prepared Teachers

The Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers expects that participants will become fully immersed in their practicum setting, and learn about and follow all of the expectations for teachers in their school. In addition to their classroom instruction responsibilities, the teachers may offer and be invited to participate in a range of activities. In schools, for example, they may attend staff meetings, parent-teacher interviews, participate in extra-curricular activities, and accompany teachers on supervisory and other duties. Under the guidance of their partner teachers, such activities offer foreign-prepared teachers further experiences for inquiry into the various aspects of teaching in Canada which may be different from their previous experiences in their home countries. **Attendance at the field site is compulsory. A maximum of three days of absence is allowed each semester.** These days are for illness or family emergency, religious holidays, and must be reported to the Partner Teacher and program Field Advisor.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS DURING PRACTICUMS:

- Conduct themselves professionally.
- Arrive and leave the school at the time directed by the Partner Teacher.
- Communicate clearly to the Partner Teacher and Field Advisor when extenuating circumstances cause absences or tardiness.
- Be flexible and sensitive in adapting to the school and community context.
- Critically and creatively reflect on professional goals (daily and weekly) and planning for continued goal setting.
- Maintain up to date Practicum Guide TQS Table; this will need to be made available regularly to the partner teacher and Field Advisor upon request.
- Make time daily to pre and post conference with partner teachers throughout the practicum.
- **Plan and implement small group activities using the lesson plan format provided in the Practicum Guide**. Small group lessons such as a 'mini-unit' or centre activity.
- **Team-teach at least two whole class lessons with the partner teacher.** Plan, teach and write a reflection of teaching. Prepare lesson plans and state the TQS goal for which 'evidence' is being obtained. Debrief with partner teachers to discuss how the lesson achieved the identified TQS descriptors in the Practicum Guide.
- **Plan and teach a series of three to five sequential lessons per week to a large group (same class)**. Prepare lesson plans according to the template provided which include a section on assessment. Elicit feedback from partner teachers and record examples of 'evidence' and reflections in Learning Journals.
- **Prepare at least one original or substantially adapted formal unit plan** based on the Backward Design Model (of approximately 5-8 lessons) aimed at developing deeper understanding of core concepts. This unit plan should use the Unit Plan Template provided in this Guide and should be reviewed by the Partner Teacher and Field Instructor **before it is taught**.
- **Teach for at least 50%-75% of the instructional time for a minimum of three weeks during each practicum during the immersion weeks.**

- When not teaching, be involved by assisting, tutoring individuals and working in small groups.
- Participate in scheduled in-services in their practicum schools.
- Take the initiative to contribute to extracurricular activities and to participate in professional development opportunities.

ACTIVITIES PARTICIPANTS MAY ENGAGE IN DURING THE BEGINNING WEEKS OF THEIR PRACTICUMS ARE:

- Get to know the students – recording observations about individual and group particularities including: age groupings, gender balance, learning abilities, interested/ hobbies, apparent learning styles, apparent cultural/ethnic/racial/socio-economic backgrounds, etc (Use the Observation Guide to assist and record these in the Learning Journal).
- Get to know the community – take a walk around the school and write a brief description of what you see. Think of the community as a resource for your students and jot down some ideas for local field explorations of the students in your partner schools.
- Get to know the school – look for patterns in how school life is organized, the physical and social organization of the school, how student interact with each other and with the staff. Conduct research on the history of the school.
- Observe learning activities in several classrooms and subject areas.
- Initiate a conversation with a teacher about assessment and evaluation practices.
- Look at the instructional materials, and if possible discuss them with the partner teachers and Field Advisor.
- If possible, initiate conversations with school support staff about their roles.
- Reflect upon observations of the school and how that helps to understand the students' contexts.
- If you have a particular strength or skill set, share this with the staff at your partner school.

- Take advantage of the professional learning opportunities offered at the school or school division. Make sure you check with your partner teacher or principal to ensure it is appropriate for you to attend.

The Role of the Partner Teachers

During the practicum term, the most important role of the Partner Teachers is to offer opportunities for the program participants for learning, and to engage in conversations about teaching and learning. The term mentorship fits the relationship we hope is created between the partner teachers and participants. Being a mentor requires considerable dialogue with partner teachers, giving explanations and reasons for practice.

Partner teachers are expected to welcome participants into their classes and to introduce them to the established routines of the classroom. They should also be introduced to students, school administration, school policies and school improvement plans. We ask that they are provided a space in which to work and have access to documents as curriculum guides, program of studies, resources, etc. Program participants should be assisted with integrating of their previous experiences as teachers into the Canadian context through collaborative planning, sharing resources and ideas, discussing learner needs, translating curriculum objectives into learning activities, discussing and modeling appropriate teaching strategies and ideas on managing classrooms. Partner teacher communication and feedback to program participants on an ongoing basis will be essential to their learning. It is suggested that regular, non-instructional time is established at the beginning of the practicum to meet with the participants to complete these activities.

SOME OF THE MORE SPECIFIC TASKS OF THE PARTNER TEACHER ARE:

- Introduce the program participant to the school, the classrooms, the students, school policies, improvement plans, and the culture of the school.
- Provide opportunities for participants to observe and participate in a variety of instructional settings and activities.
- Respect the cultural and personal difference in the participants and assist in their understanding of the culture of Canadian schools/educational systems.

- Model various instructional strategies, and suggesting alterative possibilities of teaching.
- Include program participants in planning, assessment, and other work with students.
- Assign instructional tasks on a gradually increasing scope of difficulty and challenge.
- Assist the participant in understanding how the program of studies are turned into classroom teaching and learning activities.
- Identify core concept topics and time frames so that the participant may begin planning his/her teaching responsibilities as early as possible in the practicum.
- Team teach and generate lessons with the participant.
- Review and provide feedback on the participants lesson/unit plans.
- Provide guidance for planning, teaching and evaluating a series of lessons, learning projects, etc.
- Provide timely and regular feedback to participants on a regular basis through conferencing and through written comments in the participants' Learning Journals.
- Discuss the teacher's work with the Field Advisor and should a concern arise, contacting the Field Advisor immediately.
- Fill out lesson observation records of the students records and reviewing these with the participants after each lesson taught.
- Play a direct role in formative and summative assessment and evaluation of the participants' performance as a team with the Field Advisor.
- Complete a narrative assessment of the participant at the end of the practicum* (see the Guidelines for Assessment).

The Role of the Field Advisor

The Field Advisor is a link between the site personnel, partner teachers and the participants. The responsibilities of the Field Advisor include:

- Establishing lines of communication between the partner teacher and participants.

- Organizing scheduled visits and formal teaching observations with the partner teachers and participants.
- Providing feedback to the participant on a regular basis.
- Providing support to the partner teacher and participant should there be concerns about the work of the participant.
- Videotaping the participants once during each semester for the purposes of participants' self-assessment of language and teaching skills.
- Offering assistance to the partner teacher in the writing of the narrative assessment (if requested).
- Preparing a narrative assessment of each participants' strengths and areas of improvement at designated intervals.
- Developing the participants' understanding of the field experiences in the classroom component of the program.

Guidelines for the Narrative Assessment by the Partner Teachers

The purpose of assessment in the field experiences is to help the teachers understand their capabilities and growth appropriate to the expectations of outlined in this Practicum Guide.

Partner teachers are expected to give their program participants formative assessment of their practice through the means of conversations, discussions and lesson debriefing. This kind of regular assessment should be conducted at least once a week, allowing the participant to respond, improve upon and develop new strategies to address areas of growth. The Practicum Guide TQS Table, completed through collaboration and discussion with the partner and participant, will serve as a means for documenting this formative assessment and evaluation throughout the semester.

The summative assessment for the participant will be a one-page narrative evaluation written by the partner teacher at the end of the practicum, signed and copied on school letterhead. Good narrative assessments are written in ways that are specific to each teacher and his/her performance, but in terms of the expectations and standards that apply to all teachers in Alberta.

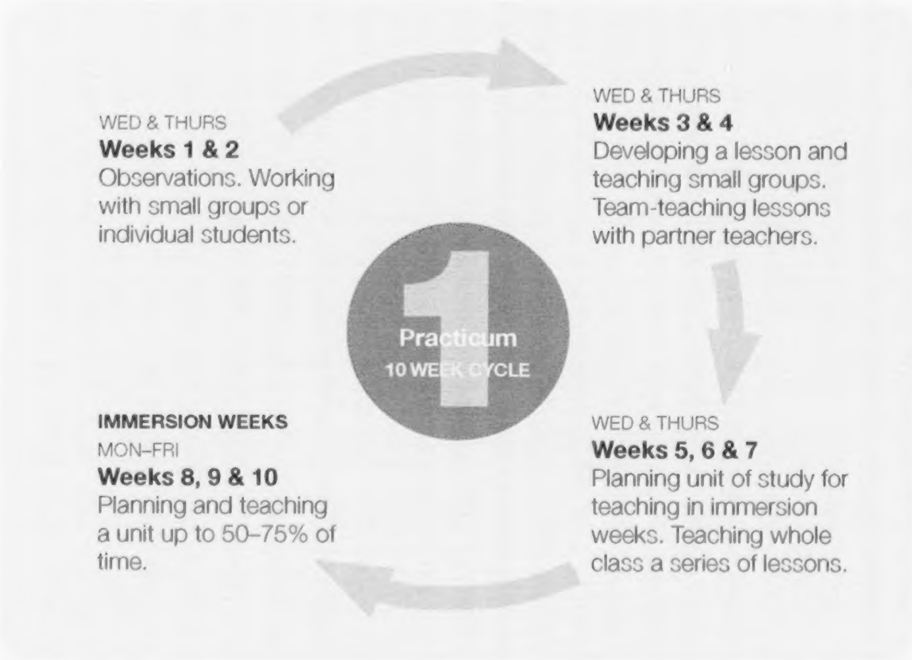
Three guidelines should guide narrative assessments for participants:

- Descriptions, with strong examples, of the participant's strengths in their teaching;
- Identification of specific areas, with examples, of how a students' work could improve
- Descriptions of the participant's contributions to the life of the classroom – to the students and school community during their practicum experience.

Comments given by partner teachers can include, but are not limited to the following areas:

- The development of professional relationships between the partner teacher, students, co-workers and school administration;
- Proficiency and use of the curriculum;
- The cultivation of an effective learning environment;
- The quality and preparation for teaching;
- The professional value of the materials used in practice teaching;
- The level of professionalism in the working environment;
- The ability to reflect critically on teaching-learning transactions;
- Progress towards professional aims;
- Proficiency in using English and sociolinguistic skills to effectively communicate to students, co-workers, parents, and school administrator.

The narrative assessment can be given directly to the participant at the end of the practicum, or emailed to the Field Advisor.

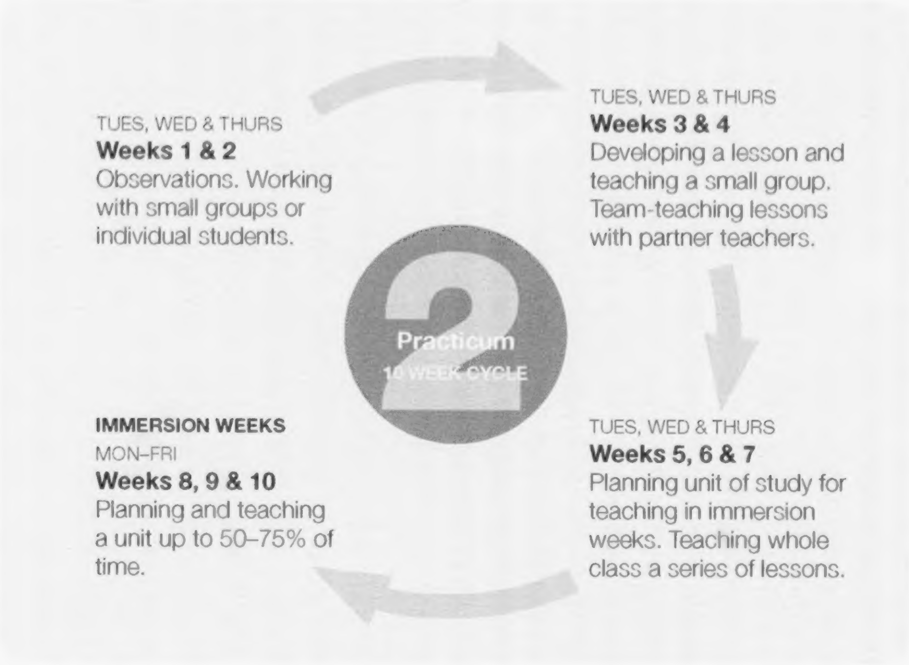


WED & THURS
Weeks 1 & 2
Observations. Working with small groups or individual students.

WED & THURS
Weeks 3 & 4
Developing a lesson and teaching small groups. Team-teaching lessons with partner teachers.

WED & THURS
Weeks 5, 6 & 7
Planning unit of study for teaching in immersion weeks. Teaching whole class a series of lessons.

IMMERSION WEEKS
MON–FRI
Weeks 8, 9 & 10
Planning and teaching a unit up to 50–75% of time.



TUES, WED & THURS
Weeks 1 & 2
Observations. Working with small groups or individual students.

TUES, WED & THURS
Weeks 3 & 4
Developing a lesson and teaching a small group. Team-teaching lessons with partner teachers.

TUES, WED & THURS
Weeks 5, 6 & 7
Planning unit of study for teaching in immersion weeks. Teaching whole class a series of lessons.

IMMERSION WEEKS
MON–FRI
Weeks 8, 9 & 10
Planning and teaching a unit up to 50–75% of time.

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) Table

The Alberta *Teaching Quality Standard* (TQS) Applicable to the provision of Basic Education in Alberta states that:

> *Quality teaching occurs when the teacher's ongoing analysis of the context, and the teacher's decisions about which pedagogical knowledge and abilities to apply result in optimum learning by students.*

To assist in the preparation of foreign-prepared immigrant teachers in meeting the components outlined in the TQS descriptors, this table will be used to set goals for teachers in their two practicums.

DESCRIPTOR

The teacher knows and understands...	The teacher has demonstrated understanding through this action...	The teacher thinks...
Personalizing Teaching and Learning a) contextual variables affect teaching and learning. They know how to analyze many variables at one time, and how to respond by making reasoned decisions about their teaching practice and students' learning.	Evidence	Reflection
The Alberta Teaching Context b) the structure of the Alberta education system. They know the different roles in the system, and how responsibilities and accountabilities are determined, communicated and enforced.	Evidence	Reflection
The Alberta Programs of Study c) the purposes of the Guide to education and programs of study germane to the specialization or subject disciplines they are prepared to teach. They know how to use these documents to inform and direct their planning, instruction and assessment of student progress.	Evidence	Reflection

DESCRIPTOR

The teacher knows and understands…	The teacher has demonstrated understanding through this action…	The teacher thinks…
Subject Area Knowledge d) the subject disciplines they teach. They have completed a structured program of studies through which they gained the knowledge, concepts, methodologies and assumptions in one or more areas of specialization or subject disciplines taught in Alberta schools.	Evidence	Reflection
Differentiating Teaching e) all students can learn, albeit at different rates and in different ways. They know how (including when and how to engage others) to identify students' different learning styles and ways students learn. They understand the need to respond to differences by creating multiple paths to learning for individuals and groups of students, including students with special learning needs.	Evidence	Reflection
Planning for Instruction f) the purpose of short, medium and long range planning. They know how to translate curriculum and desired outcomes into reasoned, meaningful and incrementally progressive learning opportunities for students. They also understand the need to vary their plans to accommodate individuals and groups of students.	Evidence	Reflection
Creating Effective Learning Environments g) students need for physical, social, cultural and physiological security. They know how to engage students in creating effective classroom routines. They know how and when to apply a variety of management strategies that are in keeping with the situation, and provide for minimal disruptions to student learning.	Evidence	Reflection

DESCRIPTOR

The teacher knows and understands…	The teacher has demonstrated understanding through this action…	The teacher thinks…
Respecting Students h) the importance of respecting students' human dignity. They know how to establish with different students, professional relationships that are characterized by mutual respect, trust, and harmony.	Evidence	Reflection
Instructional Strategies i) there are many approaches to teaching and learning. They know a broad range of instructional strategies appropriate to their area of specialization and the subject discipline they teach, and know which strategies are appropriate to help different students achieve different outcomes.	Evidence	Reflection
Integrating Technology j) the functions of traditional and electronic teaching/learning technologies. They know how to use and engage students in using these technologies to present and deliver content, communicate effectively with others, find and secure information, research, word process, manage information, and keep records.	Evidence	Reflection
Assessment for and of Learning k) the purposes of student assessment. They know how to assess the range of learning objectives by selecting and developing a variety of classroom and large scale assessment techniques and instruments, and how to use the results for the ultimate benefit of students.	Evidence	Reflection

DESCRIPTOR

The teacher knows and understands…	The teacher has demonstrated understanding through this action…	The teacher thinks…
Developing Relationships with Parents l) the importance of engaging parents, purposefully and meaningfully, in all aspects of teaching and learning. They know how to develop and implement strategies that create and enhance partnerships amount teachers, parents and students.	Evidence	Reflection
Engaging and Integrating Community Resources m) student learning is enhanced through the use of home and community resources. They know how to identify resources relevant to teaching and learning objectives, and how to incorporate these resources into their teaching and students' learning.	Evidence	Reflection
Extracurricular Contributions n) the importance of contributing, independently and collegially, to the quality of school. They know the strategies whereby they can, independently and collegially enhance and maintain the quality of their schools to the benefit of students, parents, community and colleagues.	Evidence	Reflection
Professional Development o) the importance of career-long learning. They know how to assess their own learning and how to work with others responsible for supervising and evaluating teachers. They know how to use the findings of assessments, supervision and evaluations to select, develop and implement their own professional development activities.	Evidence	Reflection

DESCRIPTOR

The teacher knows and understands…	The teacher has demonstrated understanding through this action…	The teacher thinks…
Developing a Personal Philosophy of Teaching and Learning p) the importance of guiding their actions with a personal, overall vision of the purpose of teaching. They are able to communicate their vision, including how it has changed as a result of new knowledge, understanding and experience.	Evidence	Reflection

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Lesson Plan Template

(Two to be completed for each practicum)

NAME OF TAC TEACHER:

NAME OF SCHOOL:

GRADE:	NO. IN CLASS:	CLASS TEACHER:	DATE:

PROGRAM OF STUDY OUTCOMES (include numbers/descriptions):

LESSON OBJECTIVES:

PREREQUISITE SKILLS/KNOWLEDGE:

EQUIPMENT/MATERIALS:

CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION:

STARTER:

WHOLE CLASS ACTIVITIES:

GROUP WORK/INDEPENDENT WORK:

ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

DIFFERENTIATION (identify alternative activities/special accommodations for students with needs):

CLOSURE:

HOMEWORK/FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES:

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Understanding by Design Unit Plan Template

Fill out this unit plan template and attach two detailed lesson plans from the unit – one unit plan is required for each practicum.

UNIT TITLE:	GRADE LEVELS:
SUBJECT/TOPIC AREAS:	
KEY WORDS/PHRASES:	
DESIGNED BY:	TIME FRAME:

BRIEF SUMMARY OF UNIT:

STAGE ONE DESIRED RESULTS

ESTABLISHED GOALS (from the Program of Studies):

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

UNDERSTANDINGS:

Students will understand that…

Students will know…

Students will be able to…

STAGE TWO ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

What evidence will show that students understand?

PERFORMANCE TASKS:

OTHER EVIDENCE:

STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION:

STAGE THREE LEARNING PLAN

List the learning activities of the unit plan in sequence.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Observation Guide

Practicum Observation Guide for Program Participants

As you record your growth towards meeting our program goals, you will need to develop your observation skills. There are many ways to carry out classroom observations. The way you go about observing will depend on your purpose. Here are some suggested observation activities:

Overall observation of the classroom. It would be interesting to do this with a partner and compare notes and ideas afterwards.

- Your major questions might be:
  - What is going on here?
  - What kinds of materials are available to students?
  - What kinds of instructional patterns do I see?
    - How are the students interacting with each other and the teacher?
  - What kinds of engagement or disengagement do I see?
    - Briefly list, analyze, and discuss various room arrangements seen. How did they support or interfere with learning?
  - How do teachers deal with inappropriate behavior?
  - How do teachers reinforce appropriate behavior?
- Gather concrete, written evidence to answer you questions. You might take an inventory of the books, charts, lab materials or computers in the classroom.
- Document how students respond to teacher questions.
- Document questions students ask of each other and their teacher.
- Describe students who are engaged in classroom activities. What exactly are they doing? How does this tell you they are engaged?
- Look for patterns – do student seem more engaged by some types of materials and activities? Are there observable gender or cultural differences in student responses?

- Focus on specific teacher activities: giving assignments, asking quizzes.
- Focus also on the **non-verbal** behavior of the teacher: does he/she move around, make contact by proximity [nearness], with individual students and groups of students? How does the teacher enact his/her relationships with students? Is there time for personal contact/interaction? Is all instruction oriented to the "whole class," do some pupils obtain more attention than others, etc?
- We tend to be shaped by "critical incidents" which engage our emotions as well as our minds. Pay particular attention to such incidents that touch you deeply. Write them down.

Observation/interview with an individual student. In this. case you will develop a learning profile of one particular student (often at the suggestion of your partner teacher).

- Observe the student in different types of tasks (small and large group work, independent activities).
- With the student's permission, sit down with him/her and look at samples of work and discuss it.
- Carry out an interview to find out about the student's interests.

As you partner teacher if he/she has a particular need for observation.

- For example, your partner teacher may be interested in how a particular small group interacts during literature circles or a science lab activity.
- Note down interaction patterns and some examples of talk that give you insight into students' understanding of the material.

Remember to include all of your observation notes in your Learning Journals. Partner Teachers and the Field Advisor may ask you to submit their journals on a weekly basis to read and make comments. Information gathered in the Learning Journal will be included in the Practicum Portfolio at the end of each semester.

APPENDICES

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Lesson Observation Report

TEACHER:

DATE:

Component	Comments
1. Focus	
• States objective	
• Displays objective	
• Activates/previous learning and/or builds background information	
2. Instruction	
• Aligns instruction to objectives	
• Demonstrates enthusiasm	
• Scaffolds topics and skills	
• Organizes content into small logical chunks	
• Uses appropriate pace	
• Uses explicit guided practice	
3. Interaction	
• Organizes students in pairs and small groups to process new knowledge and skills	
• Engages students in description, discussion, and prediction activities to enhance new knowledge	
• Engages students in activities that require them to elaborate about new knowledge	
• Engages students in activities that require them to write out and represent their conclusions and understandings	
4. Monitor Learning	
• Formatively assesses student progress	
• Provides feedback	
• Provides encouragement/optimism	
• Responds to learners' needs (e.g., re-teach, clarify, extend learning)	
5. Closure	
• Engages students in concluding activities that require them to reflect on their own progress related to the stated learning goals	

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Oral Presentation Rubric

Level Criteria		Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
CONTENT	Accuracy	**All** of the information presented is related to the theme of the presentation.	**Most** of the information presented is related to the theme of the presentation.	**Some** of the information presented is related to the theme of the presentation.
	Resources	**All** of the resources support the information presented.	**Many** of the resources support the information presented.	**Some** of the resources support the information presented.
LANGUAGE	Clarity	Utilizes **comprehensive** vocabulary and insightful organization of ideas that includes **significant** information.	The vocabulary used is **generally comprehensive** and **relevant** to the information. There is **logical** organization of ideas.	The vocabulary used is **partially comprehensive** and **basic**. The organization of ideas is **reasonable**.
	Pace	Utilizes an **appropriate** pace of speaking that is **completely comprehensible**.	Utilizes a **mostly appropriate** pace of speaking that is **generally comprehensible**.	Utilizes pace of speaking that is **relatively appropriate** and is **somewhat comprehensible**.
	Fluency	Adjusts volume and tone of voice to **captivate** and **significantly engage** the audience.	Adjusts volume and tone of voice to the audience to **frequently engage** the audience.	Adjusts volume and tone of voice to **partially engage** the audience.

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Oral Presentation Self-Reflection Rubric

	Yes	No	A good start	Evidence – I know this because
Did I communicate my questions clearly to other students?	○	○	○	
Did I communicate my answers clearly to others?	○	○	○	
Did I correctly use grammar and new vocabulary when I spoke?	○	○	○	

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Peer Feeback for Role Play Scenarios

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

PART PLAYED:

I THINK THE STRENGTHS OF YOUR OVERALL ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE YOUR IDEAS WERE:

THE AREA IN COMMUNICATION WHERE I THINK YOU COULD USE SOME MORE DEVELOPMENT IS:

I ESPECIALLY LIKED THE PART WHEN YOU:

NEXT TIME I SUGGEST THAT YOU:

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Rubric for Practicum Portfolio

	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
Components	All components are included (may have additional items). Strong connections between and among components. Exceptionally clear and easy to understand and examine.	Most components are included. Shows connections between and among components. Reasonably clear and easy to understand and examine.	Some components are included. Limited connections between and among components. Clear enough to understand and examine.
Communication	Exceptional use of appropriate vocabulary. Grammar and writing mechanics are remarkably consistent and accurate. Very well established coherence in ideas and materials presented.	Used appropriate vocabulary. Grammar and writing mechanics are quite consistent and accurate. Considerably established coherence in ideas and materials presented.	Limited use of appropriate vocabulary. Grammar and writing mechanics are somewhat consistent and accurate. Partially established coherence in ideas and materials presented.
Overall Presentation	Items are thoroughly presented and organized effectively. Superbly demonstrated creativity and insight. Emphasized all major points.	Items are clearly presented and organized. Displayed creativity in design and layout. Specified most major points.	Item are presented and somewhat orderly. Slightly showed creativity. Stated some major points.

Comments:

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Inquiry Project Rubric

Qualities & Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
Introduction Title; Objective or Thesis; Problem statement; Orientation to reader; Topic.	a. The writer introduces the topic and its relevance to (1) the discipline; and (2) the chosen audience. The introduction lays groundwork for the direction of the paper. b. Thesis or objective is clearly stated and appropriately focused. c. The main idea stands along with details. d. The title is appropriate and describes the topic very effectively.	a. The writer makes the reader aware of the overall problem, challenge, or topic to be examined. b. Thesis is stated but clarity and/or focus could be better. c. The title adequately describes the topic.	a. There is no reference to the topic, problem, or audience. b. There is no statement of thesis or objective of the research. c. The title is inappropriate and does not describe the topic.
Clarity and Correctness of the Writing	a. The writing is clear and concise. b. There are no (or very few) mistakes in grammar, spelling, and/or punctuation. c. The writing does not ramble; the paper is carefully written and edited. d. The paper is well organized and logically sequenced. e. The paper is very informative and extremely well written.	a. Paragraph or sentence structure is repetitive. b. Much of the writing is generally clear, but meaning is sometimes hidden. c. There are some mistakes in grammar, spelling, and/or punctuation but they do not cause confusion. d. The paper is informative but could be more developed.	a. It is difficult for the reader to understand what the writer is trying to express. b. Writing is unorganized. c. Paper contains spelling and grammatical errors as well as improper punctuation. d. Mistakes in grammar, spelling, and/or punctuation cause confusion and show lack of concern for quality of writing. e. Writing rambles; the paper appears hastily written.

Qualities & Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
Conclusions Synthesis of ideas and culminating in a research question, or suggestions for further research, or finalizing with a clear position.	a. The writer makes succinct and precise conclusions based on the review of literature. b. Insights into the problem/topic are appropriate. c. Conclusions are strongly supported within the paper. d. There is a wealth of relevant resources used that add depth to the research and insight into the topic.	a. The writer provides concluding remarks that show an analysis and synthesis of ideas and information. b. The resources used were generally relevant and appropriate to address the research question.	a. There is little or no indication that the writer tried to synthesize the information or draw conclusions. b. There is a limited scope of research with questionable resources.
Sources & Citations & Proper APA Format	a. The writer includes all necessary citations in the body of the review. b. The references in the list match the in-text citations and all are properly cited in APA/ MLA style. c. Numerous sources are cited. All sources are accurately documented.	a. The writer cites sources within the body of the review and includes a corresponding References list. Some formatting problems exist or some elements are missing. b. An acceptable number of sources are cited. All sources are accurately documented, but some are not in the desired format. c. Paper is in APA/MLA style but with some errors.	a. The writer does not include in-text citations accurately for statements made in the review. b. An insufficient number of sources are cited and/or not accurately documented. c. The paper is not written in APA/MLA style.

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Lesson Plans Rubric

	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
Focus	Language learning objectives and learning outcomes are listed clearly and logically in a precise manner.	Language learning objectives and learning outcomes are outcomes are generally presented.	Language learning objectives and language outcomes are somewhat clear.
Instructional Strategies and Content	The language of the lesson plan is easy to understand and follow. Students' prior knowledge is activated through meaningful activities. Scaffolding of concepts is evident and effectively supports learning. Instruction is accurately aligned to the objectives and learning outcomes.	The language of the lesson plan generally facilitates understanding. Students' prior knowledge may be activated. Scaffolding of concepts may be evident to support learning. Instruction is generally aligned to the language objectives and learning outcomes.	The language of the lesson plan requires attention for understanding by the reader. The designed learning activities are somewhat aligned with the outcomes and learning objectives.
Group Work – Active Learning/ Interaction	Group work and student learning activities are effectively planned. Groups are organized for maximum participation and allow for productive interaction among students.	Group work and student learning activities are planned.	Group work is not included in the plan.
Assessment	Formative assessment is integrated successfully as part of the learning activities. Assessment tasks allow for students to self-reflect on their learning and are linked directly to the language and learning outcomes.	Formative assessment is integrated. Assessment activities are linked to the language objectives and learning outcomes. Students may be asked to self-reflect on their progress towards meeting the learning objectives.	Assessment activities are included in the lesson plan in the form of quizzes and/or tests.
Differentiation	Different learning styles and special learning needs are accommodated in the learning activities. The instruction is planned to meet student needs in an integrated way.	There is some evidence of differentiated learning activities to meet individual student learning needs.	Extra worksheets or different worksheets for individual students are included.

Comments:

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Video Self-Evaluation

Video Self-Evaluation of Communication and Teaching Skills

After viewing your video, please answer the following questions. Please type them out and give them to me when you have finished.

1. What is your overall impression of your communication skills during this lesson?
2. Can you describe pace of your speaking?
3. Observe yourself asking your students questions. Are the questions clear? Do you state them once or repeat them a few times? How are the students in responding?
4. Transcribe any ten sentences that you have said. When you have finished, reflect upon what you notice from doing this.
5. What do you think is your greatest strength in your oral communication for teaching?
6. What do you think is your greatest challenge?
7. How can you address these challenges? Identify at least four strategies you will use.
8. How did you feel about the way the lesson went in general?
9. What was the best moment of the lesson?
10. What will you focus on next time in your lesson?

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Unit Plan Rubric

	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing
Objectives	Objectives are very clear and all relate to the Program of Studies.	Objectives are mostly clear and most relate to the Program of Studies clear.	Objectives are somewhat clear and some relate to the Program of Studies.
Learning Activities	Most of the learning activities are very effective and engaging for students.	Some of the learning activities are very effective and engaging for students.	A few of the learning activities are very effective and engaging for students.
Assessment Strategies	A wide range of assessment strategies are used including formative assessment.	A range of assessment strategies are used.	Some assessment strategies are used.
Performance Tasks	Performance tasks include many opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts taught.	Performance tasks include some opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts taught.	Performance tasks include some opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts taught.
Use of Language	Excellent use of vocabulary and grammar with no spelling mistakes and excellent sentence structure.	Good use of vocabulary and grammar with few spelling mistakes and correct sentence structure.	The unit requires editing in terms of spelling and sentence structure.
Clarity of Presentation	Information is logically organized and broken up into clearly defined and effective sections.	Information is mostly organized in an effective and logical manner.	Much of the information requires attention to logical organization.
Use of Technology	Technology is integrated effectively throughout the unit.	Technology is integrated in a few of the lessons of the unit.	There is some attempt at integrating technology into some of the lessons in the unit.

Comments:

APPENDICES

NARRATIVE EVALUATIONS

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Sample Final Evaluation

Course Evaluation

March 11, 2011

[NAME]

The pilot Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers is a fulltime, 24-week, two-semester program designed to assist immigrant teachers overcome challenges they face in obtaining employment as teachers in Canada. Each week of the program is designed around a theoretical educational concept and related case scenario. Participants have two 10-week practicum placements in local schools – two days a week the first semester and three days a week the second semester. Each practicum ends with a three-week full-time immersion period in schools. Through the classroom and practicum components, this program provides contextually relevant experiences for foreign-prepared teachers. These experiences allow them to learn about Canadian pedagogical practices and to master the professional language needed in various situations commonly encountered by teachers in Canadian schools.

LEARNING TASKS:

[THE STUDENT] completed all of the required learning tasks in our program which included theoretical and case readings, small group tasks, case discussions, individual oral presentations, field seminars, reflective writing, two unit plans, two practicum portfolios, and a Biography of Learning project. [THE STUDENT] put a great deal of effort into her course work and was able to demonstrate excellent understanding of the pedagogical concepts we studied. [THE STUDENT] written work was always impeccably completed and she has outstanding understanding of student-centered pedagogy and practice.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT:

[THE STUDENT] has excellent reading comprehension and written skills in English. She made good progress in her understanding and using English to learn and to teach. She is able to communicate messages both orally and in writing in English very effectively. [THE STUDENT] made excellent contributions to our class discussions and she is able to use terminology associated with current teaching pedagogy in both formal and informal situations. [THE STUDENT] demonstrated through her practicum placements that her English language skills are more than sufficient for teaching, as she was understood by students in the classroom with little or no difficulty.

Practicum Teaching:

[THE STUDENT] had two very successful practicum teaching experiences. In her first practicum, [THE STUDENT] taught math at the senior high level at [SCHOOL NAME] High School. During her second practicum, she taught math to grades 8 & 9 at [SCHOOL NAME] Junior High school.

[THE STUDENT] is one of the most effective instructional designers I have ever had. She came into our program with a strong pedagogical background and understanding of student-centered education and continued to refine her skills throughout our course. [THE STUDENT] is an excellent teacher with a great deal of expertise in her subject area and familiarity with the Alberta Program of Studies. She has developed excellent management skills and is able to motivate, guide and mentor students of all levels. [THE STUDENT] demonstrated that she is able to accommodate learning differences in the classroom, differentiate and personalize learning for her students. She was always thoroughly planned and ready for instruction.

[THE STUDENT] has the ability to work collaboratively with a variety of people. In both of her practicums, [THE STUDENT] demonstrated flexibility and accommodation to the differing styles of her teaching placements and partner teachers. She participated in parent-teacher interviews outside of the classroom, formed relationships with other colleagues in both schools, and put her best effort to contributing to the learning environment. [THE STUDENT] took feedback extremely well and was always reflective about her teaching. [THE STUDENT] is consummate professional – willing to do whatever it takes to be the best possible educator she can be.

OVERALL:

[THE STUDENT] was a supportive, fun, and positive member in the foreign-prepared teacher course. I know that [THE STUDENT] will be a well-organized, effective and professional teacher in Canada. [THE STUDENT] is curious about learning new things and genuinely cares about students and her colleagues. It has been a pleasure to be her instructor and observe her knowledge of teaching grow throughout this course. I certainly hope [THE STUDENT] is given the opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of students very soon. I wish her all the best in her future teaching positions – any school that hires [THE STUDENT] will be extremely lucky to have her.

[INSTRUCTOR SIGNATURE]

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Sample Lesson Evaluation

Evaluation of Teaching Lesson #1

[NAME]

[DATE]

[THE STUDENT], you did a great job of teaching your first formal lesson that was evaluated. Here are what I see as the strengths of the lesson:

- You have developed good rapport with your students. They know you and like working with you – that is apparent in your teaching.
- You have a wonderful way of responding to students that is kind, supportive and yet firm. You are able to tell students your expectations in the lesson and you were consistent in your use of classroom management techniques.
- You did an excellent job of explaining the task and demonstrating what students were to do in the lesson. Your oral directions were clear and your demonstrations were easy to follow.
- The task was appropriate and interesting for your students.
- Your lesson planning was thorough and effective.
- You are relaxed and natural with your students.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT TIME:

- I would suggest that you think about your questioning strategies. You tended to use the same kind of sequence of questioning – what is called IRF – Initiate, Response, Feedback. Perhaps you would try to ask some more open-ended or higher level thinking questions for your students to get them using their critical thinking skills rather than using questioning as a way to move your instruction along.

- I would agree with your self-evaluation that you need to plan ahead for the students who need more challenge. In the future I would suggest incorporating a challenge task, as well as the accommodations for those who need more help or time, in your lesson planning.
- One or two of the students probably could have been spoken to outside of class. These students were trying to be disruptive and one was a little disrespectful to you. I wouldn't accept that from them. You did a good job of keeping students on task and being consistent with your expectations for behavior but I did feel that there were a couple of students who may have needed an even more firm approach to their behavior (especially the ESL student).

I was pleased to observe your friendly and respectful manner with your students. You were able to have your students successfully complete the task you set out. I believe you will be very successful in your teaching and I look forward to observing you teach again!

[INSTRUCTOR NAME]

Instructor & Field Advisor

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Sample Narrative Partner Teacher Evaluation

To whom it may concern,

[DATE]

Please consider this as a letter of recommendation for [THE STUDENT].

As a part of a foreign-prepared teacher program, [THE STUDENT] served a practicum in a combined grade three and four class at [THE SCHOOL] since the beginning of January. She attended her host school each day from 8:30am to approximately 4:00pm. She was responsible for progressing from observation and reflection to teaching up to 100% of the day in the last two days of her final week. Throughout the practicum at [THE SCHOOL], she planned and taught lessons from units in two subject areas and taught individual lessons in other subject areas.

When [THE STUDENT] began her practicum, she was responsible for observing the teaching practice and getting to know the children in the classroom. Much of the time was spent assisting students in the classroom with spelling and corrections in their writing, supporting students with understanding a lesson, and writing in her journal about the routines that occurred. It was evident in the initial week that [THE STUDENT] took this placement and her position seriously as she immediately demonstrated effort toward participation in the classroom setting. She challenged herself to try new tasks each day and continually asked for suggestions to improve her interactions with the students.

Over the remaining weeks, [THE STUDENT] experienced teaching small groups and individuals, planning lessons and conducting learning opportunities for elementary children in the subject areas of math, social studies, science and physical education. She demonstrated strength in preparing materials for a lesson and showed ability in facilitating activities with worksheets and textbooks. She communicated with students and managed the behaviour of small groups and, over time, the entire class. In regards to effort, [THE STUDENT] demonstrated consideration for her role as a teacher, and it is evident that she is interested in pursuing this profession. As a result of discussions and reflections, she appears to be more able to assess her position as a teacher and has begun to define her philosophy of education. With the help of professional resources that she accessed in her spare time, [THE STUDENT] became more adept at finding helpful information to answer questions and confirm her beliefs about teaching.

Upon reflection of [THE STUDENT'S] teaching ability, I believe she would benefit from applying a metacognitive learning structure to her own practice. This could include consistent analysis of her lessons where she is more deeply reflective, seeks knowledgeable feedback that supports the school development plan and school philosophy, applies it to her daily work. Once she is more apt at attempting new strategies and problem-solving, she may find that the tasks she struggles with can become easier to manage.

It was a pleasure having [THE STUDENT] as part of our staff and school community at [THE SCHOOL].

Sincerely,

[PARTNER TEACHER SIGNATURE]

APPENDICES

SAMPLES OF STUDENT WORK

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Biography of Language Learning

Biography of Language Learning Journal Entry

Looking back at the past three months, I come to realize that I take more time to coordinate my words before speaking compared to the past. I always practice reading and speaking with the right intonation and precision instead of focusing in the correct pronunciation. I discovered that diverting my attention to intonations has really helped me in my speaking very much. At least, I can say that I speak a little bit slower than when I started the program and because I try to sing the music if English I am getting better at my pronunciations too.

During my practicum, I did not get the usual response when I speak to people; in most cases I was able to make myself very clear and understandable. I heard less of "pardon me" and "can you repeat yourself".

At home, once in a while my husband record a short movie of my speaking with my knowledge and play it back to help me with my speaking which is really nice, because it is unexpected recording, it brings out the real me.

Generally, I would say I consciously work on my speaking all the time to make improvement. I am not a professional yet but I have really gained more confidence speaking in public places now compared to the past. What have really contributed to this I would say is my paying attention to how it is said rather than what is said. I tried to stress the proper words and use the right intonation. I stopped concentrating on my ascent.

Conclusively, I would say that continued practice will make me a better English speaker. Such practice involves keeping up with the regular schedule of learning to always stress the proper words, using the right tone and specifically singing the music of English.

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Biography of Learning

Biography of Learning Journal Entry

To summarize what I have learnt so far in the BPFPT program is not easy because it's been a very complex, sometimes overwhelming flow of information and personal experience.

My vocabulary has definitely become richer, and I also got to know new concepts such as backward design. It was in the program that I have heard about inquiry as a way to convey information. I developed my personal philosophy of teaching, which is the fundament that I can build my teaching practice. I got to know bits and pieces about the Canadian culture, which might help me find my place in this society. Given that the Canadian classrooms are not just multicultural but also integrating groups of students with diverse needs, I was glad to hear about how to handle or support gifted and special needs as well as English Language Learning and Aboriginal students. These are just examples from the vast amount of information I have received during the past three and a half months, and I know it will take me lots of time to be able to absorb it and understand it.

The other very important aspect of the course was that I had the chance to meet colleagues from different cultural and professional background. On one hand, it gave me the opportunity to hear about different practices all around the world, but on the other hand it proved that teachers think alike regardless which continent they are from, and we share lots of similar teaching experiences.

Last but not least, the course gave me the opportunity to observe and teach in real school settings. I saw the everyday routine of teachers, the joy and the challenges of teaching they have to face every day. During my practicum I recognized lots of strength I didn't even know I possessed but also I realized that still there are areas that I need to improve if I wanted to be a successful teacher.

On the whole, my experience is that teaching in Canada is not easy, and still requires lots of work and preparation, but it is not impossible if I keep on working hard to achieve this goal.

Self-evaluation

Self-Evaluation of Communication and Teaching Skills:

1. Generally speaking, the students can understand what I said, but there are still many problems about my communication skill. I leave doubt into the students, which mean students have to guess what I said. I did not use every word that communicates precisely what they mean. And I did not speak assertively which means express my thought and opinion with confidence. I need more practise the words before the class to improve my accent.
2. Pace of my speaking is not fast, but not always, sometimes with the class going on, the pace is getting fast without noticing it.
3. When I ask the students questions, the question is clear, but because my poor accent, I need borrow body language to facilitate the oral language in order to make sure the students understand me.
4. Some sentences are not complete which lead to misunderstanding the content that I want to express. The tense and the structure of some sentences are not right. I don't think I have greatest strength in oral communication
5. The great challenge for me is to convey my thought and idea effectively and clearly.
6. Four Strategies:
   - **Listen Carefully:** I often think I am listening, but are really thinking about what I am going to say next. While listen to what the student is saying, don't interrupt, don't get defensive, just hear them and reflect back what they're saying so I know you've heard. Then you'll understand them better and they'll be more willing to listen to you.
   - **Understand the student's point of view**: Most of time I hope the students listen to me and understand what I taught, but in reality, students want to feel heard and understood, so we should get the students to see things in their own way. Perhaps students have more effective way to solve the problem.
   - **Practice the new words before the class:** Perhaps there are some new terms for me, practice the whole class or the words to make oral language more fluency.

- **Watch other person's teaching Video:** Most of time we can find the other person's video who teaches the same topic. Watch them before class, and practice .and try to prepare the lesson well.

7. General speaking, the pace of the class is a little bit slow and should design more activities to keep the students busy doing something.
8. The best moment of the class is the time when the students present their solution to the class, and the students got the different way to solve the problem.
9. There are many things to make the class better.

- Design more activities to get students involved.
- Pay attention to the differentiation
- Listen to the students' feedback.
- Pay attention to all the students, not just the active kids.
- Speak clearly and effectively as possible.
- Prepare the lesson well including content, method and analyze the students' needs.

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Sample of Student Inquiry Project

Flexible Grouping in Classrooms

Inquiry Paper

BY:

24/1/2011

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Introduction

In teacher-centered instruction, teachers more often hear their voices than their students'. In other words, teaching based on lecturing, that does not allow students to express their ideas independently, and withholds students' creativity. What ways can be used and what methods can be adopted in classrooms that will allow teachers hear their students' voices? What strategies give students the opportunity to think independently and out of the teacher's box? How can teachers encourage students to answer questions and solve problems in such a way they do not primarily seek answers to please their teachers? How can teachers design their lesson plans to meet diversity? Many researchers have addressed these questions and posed different strategies in order to meet challenges raised by these questions. Grouping and flexible grouping in classrooms, are two strategies that are suggested move to instruction towards student-centered teaching rather than teacher-centered lectures.

This paper will explain and answer some related questions. First, what is flexible grouping? Second, what forms of grouping could be used in class planning and what criteria should be applied in forming these forms? Finally, how can teachers plan for students to move from one grouping activity to another, several times within a class period? The answers that this paper provides will help teachers understand the ability and the effectiveness of the flexible grouping techniques in meeting the needs of differentiating, assessment and cooperative learning.

What is flexible grouping?

Working in groups is not a new technique, but this practice is used less often in teaching in some subjects like mathematics (Burton, 2010). When working with students in small groups, teachers can listen to students, assess the students' understanding more accurately, and plan instruction to the students' needs. These groups allow students more personal attention from the teacher, and allow students to speak up in expressing their own thoughts. According to Burton, teachers should form groups based on the specific learning needs of the students for each topic. Some forms of grouping are controversial, especially ability grouping (Hallam, Rogers and Judith, 2008), thus the mere fact of grouping sometimes doesn't meet all the expectations of differentiation.

Flexible grouping, on the other hand, differs from mere grouping in the variations of the forms of grouping. Ford (2005) defines flexible grouping as a grouping that is not static, where members of the group change frequently. Another definition suggests that it is planning "how much time students will spend working alone, in groups, or with whole class" (Training., 1996). From these definitions, flexible grouping means that the class setting moves frequently from one form to another and grouping forms change according to lesson requirements. For example, an individual work may precede a whole-class work that comes after pairs–group work, or, a whole-class activity may be followed by triads–group setting activity. Thus, the teacher needs to plan his or her class to be integrated with different settings and different grouping forms.

The rationale of flexible grouping

All patterns of grouping are useful, but the exclusive use of one grouping pattern often leads to problems in classrooms. The overuse of homogenous small groups usually means that many students never have the same quality of instruction as others do. In some cases this contributes to establish a stigma attached to some groups. This negative feeling leads to a frustration of some of the students, and many times those who need help and support are not engaged. Flexible grouping as a practice addresses these concerns (Ford, 2005). In flexible grouping the teacher plans the groups considering the strengths and the weaknesses of each grouping approach and put them together to allow the teacher to best meet of the needs of the classroom. Groups are formed and dissolved as needs change to allow maximum flexibility, avoiding the static nature of traditional grouping patterns.

At the very beginning of the year, when teachers first practice flexible grouping, it may seem that things do not work and students are confused and demonstrate inappropriate behavioral patterns. But, when students and teachers become familiar to moving from one form of class setting to another, regardless of whether it happens in the same lesson or in different lessons, behavioral patterns will change. Students accommodate to this nature of moving. Research indicates that noise and in-class movement tend to stay students more engaged in tasks they perform (Training., p. 5.6).

In flexible grouping, teachers design the class time to be divided between activities based on the three different settings; work alone, work in group, and work in whole-class activity. Successful lessons and lesson plans mostly include some time and some activities in each setting (Training., p. 5.3). But it is probably more important that flexible grouping is seen over the course of many lessons. While it often is possible to form and reform groups during a single lesson on any day of instruction, it is more important for teachers to look at their classroom program over time (Ford, 2005).

Criteria for managing flexible grouping

In planning flexible grouping, teachers have to be careful in planning subtle movements from one form of grouping to another when they also focus in providing social and cooperative skills. According to Ford (2005), "flexible grouping acknowledges that grouping patterns-large groups, small groups, teams, partners, and individuals-have value because all offer…slightly different experiences with different outcomes". The Training Handbook (p. 5.3) emphasizes that the three main grouping forms are: individual work, small-group work, and whole-class work. The small-group setting can be working in pairs, triads, or more. Every setting of the three core patterns has different function and focuses in different skills. Teachers need to consider these functions when they plan their lessons to be integrated with flexible grouping.

Individual work allows students to work according to their pace and assess their achievements. In this setting individuals can use self assessment tools that the teacher provides, or guides individuals. Teachers can use this setting to allow students that prefer alone-work, to self-learning and in some times individual tutoring. Group work educates for independency in carrying responsibility, encourages social interaction and develops team-work skills. In this setting cooperative learning, peer assessment, peer teaching are all beneficial and crucial practices. In addition, group-work boosts more engagement and active in-group participation. The whole-class work is intended to whole-class discussions, asking open questions and some direct instruction or mini lessons. In some cases this setting is effective when teachers give guidelines for the next other activities or provide general instructions and expectations. A good example for whole-class setting is creating, collectively, a uniform rubric for assessing a project or a group research paper .

Contribution of Flexible Grouping to differentiated instruction

When planning, instead of defaulting to whole group teaching, teachers should consider splitting the class up into smaller groups. These flexible groups allow students more personal attention from the teacher. Forming groups should be based on the specific learning needs of the students for each topic. There are several ways to consider needs including interest, ability, random choice and student choice depending on the lesson's desired outcomes and particular mix of students. These needs are dynamic not static, therefore, one grouping form may work better than another (Wagaman, 2008).

During small group time, teachers can focus on individual needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles. For example, if one group needs more work to understand a subject, then the small group time can be used for additional practice with teacher guidance. If another group of students are spatial learners, they could examine a graphic chart that illustrates a principle. If children are interested in soccer, the teacher could use soccer examples to explore various geometric shapes. Students who are advanced in a particular field could, then, independently explore it with periodic check-in times from the teacher. In different lessons there are different topics, and again different needs. Small-group time allows the teacher to intentionally provide learning opportunities and informally assess a student in ways that are most appropriate for that student. Dynamic small-group instruction allows teachers to connect with students and plan effective ways to provide instruction at the level and in the way that it addresses each student's needs and progress (Burton, 2010).

Conclusion

For a long time, class grouping has been offered as a technique that answers the question of students' engagement and meets their different needs. But using one grouping pattern and the overuse of homogenous small groups seems to lead to problems in the classroom. Flexible grouping has emerged as a strategy that addresses some of the concerns that have appeared as a result of one grouping pattern. Regardless, flexible grouping is the use of different grouping patterns during different lessons, or using different settings in the same class period, flexible grouping addresses effectively differentiated instruction. In addition, it addresses students' motivation and engagement, and cooperative learning. For all that, teachers who use flexible grouping strategies often employ several organizational patterns for instruction. Students are grouped and regrouped according to specific goals, activities, and individual needs. When making grouping decisions, the dynamics and advantages inherent in each type of group must be considered. Research reveals that both flexible grouping types, during one class period and during different lessons, can contribute to learning. However, many other factors other than grouping may affect this process and its ends. Therefore, far from be closed, this field would be for years to come one of the areas that researchers and instructors will address and be interested to explore.

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APPENDICES

SAMPLE LETTERS

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Letter of Acceptance

July 16, 2010

We are pleased to inform you that you have been accepted into the pilot Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers. Please note that the dates for the program are from Sept 8, 2010 to March 11, 2011. This course is fulltime and will run Mondays to Fridays from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Classes will be at [LOCATION].

This program is fully funded through a grant from the Canada-Alberta Enhanced Language Training for Skilled Immigrants and Alberta Education.

It is necessary for you to make an appointment for your English language proficiency to be assessed by the Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment–Referral Centre (ILVARC) located at Immigrant Services Calgary, #1200, 910 – 7th Avenue S.W. Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2P 3N8, phone: (403) 265-1120. Please call them at your earliest convenience to set up your appointment.

Congratulations for your acceptance to our program.

Yours truly,

[SIGNATURE]

Teacher Preparation Program Representative

[SIGNATURE]

School Authority Representative

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Letter of Introduction for Partner Teachers

September 2010

Dear Partner Teachers,

On behalf of [SCHOOL DISTRICT] and the [TEACHER PREPARATION INSTITUTE], I'd like to thank you for offering your time and expertise to help a teacher in the pilot Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers. My name is [INSTRUCTOR] and I am both the instructor and field advisor for this course.

The Foreign-Prepared Teacher Bridging Program is a 24-week, two-semester program designed to assist immigrant teachers overcome challenges they face in obtaining local employment as teachers. Each week of our program is designed around a theoretical educational concept and related case scenario. Through this program, we are aiming to provide quality experiences for our teachers that will allow them to learn about Canadian pedagogical practices, and to master the professional language needed in various situations commonly encountered by teachers in Alberta schools. Each teacher will complete two ten-week practicums during the course.

The first practicum of this program focuses on the cultivation of professional relationships. The participants will be required to spend two days a week in your classroom (Wednesdays and Thursdays). Please see the Practicum Guide for further details about the roles and responsibilities of your practicum teacher, yourself as a partner teacher, and my role as Field Advisor.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns about our program or the practicum. Once again, many thanks for offering your time to play a very important role in the professional development of a fellow Canadian educator.

Yours Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Teacher Preparation Program Representative

Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

Sample Letter of Thanks for Partner Teachers

March 2011

Dear [TEACHER],

On behalf the University, I'd like to thank you for offering your time and expertise in your role as a partner teacher for a practicum student, in our pilot Bridging Program for Foreign-Prepared Teachers from January to March 2011.

As a partner teacher, you have provided a critical role for the success of one of our foreign-prepared teachers. We appreciate the professional leadership your have demonstrated through welcoming [THE TEACHER] into your classroom, familiarizing him with the local teaching context, offering feedback and suggestions to improve his practice, and working with him to design and implement effective learning activities for your students. The professional conversations he was able to have with you within the context of your collaboration has proven invaluable to his professional growth.

Your written assessment of [THE TEACHER'S] strengths and areas of need will be placed in his professional portfolio. Thank you again for demonstrating your dedication to the profession of teaching through taking on the very important responsibility of mentoring a future colleague.

Yours Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Teacher Preparation Program Representative

A+

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Bridging Program

for Foreign-Prepared Teachers

CALGARY MODEL

JANUARY 2012

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